MY OLD BAILIWICK

by OWEN KILDARE

OCT 11 1957

MY OLD BAILIWICK

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AN ALL NIGHT "BANNER CARRIER"

Special Limited Edition

MY OLD BAILIWICK

Sketches from the Parish of
"MY MAMIE ROSE"

BY
OWEN KILDARE

ILLUSTRATED

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE articles and stories collected in this volume are intended to give sidelights on the true conditions of slum and tenement life in New York City. The pivot of the world described in the following pages, is the Bowery Mission, the clearing house for the foolish and miserable of the slums. So much has been written about the poor that it is to be hoped the distinctions and differences between tenement and slum people are understood. If some wrong conceptions still exist, I hope these stories will make it clear that even in the tenement and slum districts castes and classes are jealous of their distinctions. Poverty does not always level. The victim of conditions, which he cannot control, and the victim of his own viciousness, although both equally poor, find a wide gulf between them.

The material offered is not all new, some of it having been selected from former writings, to which has been added other stories now for the first time printed. "The Feelings of the City Father," "A Limb of the Law," "The Burden of the Many," "The Level of the Sodden," and "The Talmud Man from Wilna," were published in *Pearson's;*

"Yuletide Down in Mulberry" and "A Legatee of Lovelessness" appeared in *The Outlook;* "The Burden of the Heavy-Laden" and "The Requiem of the 'Has-Beens'" in *Success;* "The Hard Life" and "The Sentimental Side of the Slums" in the *Saturday Evening Post;* "The Case of Officer Flanagan," "From the Sinners' Benches," and "The Mother of the Tenements" in *The Christian Herald;* "The Slums' Point of View" in *The Independent.*

For the information and data of the Bowery Mission I am indebted to Dr. Louis Klopsch and Superintendent J. G. Hallimond.

OWEN FRAWLEY KILDARE.

Hartford, Conn.

MY OLD BAILIWICK

I

THE REQUIEM OF THE "HAS-BEENS"

Brother, you are gazing backward toward the scenes of your
mistakes;
You are weeping o'er your errors till your proud heart almost
breaks.
You're repenting and regretting, you are sighing, "Oh, alas!"
And you're missing all the glories of the present as they pass.
Leave the grim and gruesome picture,—look the other way
awhile,
For the face that's toward the future is the face that wears a
smile.—S. W. Gillilan.

"IF I had only known! Oh, if I had only known!" Time and time again have I heard this cry wrung from the breasts of men who, according to all laws of nature, should have been in the midst of the struggle of life, with no time for vain regrets. The wail is pathetic and full of self-reproach, and it excites pity, but the men who give utterance to it are not always entirely deserving of commiseration. They are puzzling mysteries, not only to casual observers, but also to the men and women who have made this particular class their life-study.

"If I had only known! Oh, if I had only known!"—with all its pathos,—is nothing more or less than a confession of inability to battle with the least adverse of circumstances. Ignorance of the existence before them cannot be pleaded by the "has-beens." A week's stay in a great city like New York affords one enough side-lights on the lives of these wrecks to understand their dreariness. The news columns, police court records, and hospital reports leave no phase of this life untouched; yet along the Bowery of New York—that great highway of the foolish and the miserable—are seen, daily, new recruits for the army of the hopeless.

Would that I could say to you, "Come, let you and me go out into the morass and drag from its slimy suction a fellow-man." But I cannot. The battle is fought without ceasing, the cures are lavishly applied, and much of our pitying love is given, but still others come along the highway, not to fill the vacancies, for there are few, but to swell the ranks of this sinister army. If I cannot suggest an effective remedy for the curing of this condition, I can, at least, give you the truth concerning it.

As in all other great cities, one section of New York is given up almost entirely to the flotsam and jetsam of the population. The Bowery—always condemned, often defamed—and its immediate vicinity have long been the camping-ground of the homeless. Being an important thoroughfare, it is trav-

ersed by many people, and many attractive stores are rivals in luring prospective buyers. The resorts of ten years ago have vanished, and the day life of the Bowery is not at all what a stranger would expect. The street is kept as clean as many others in this metropolis, there are both well-dressed and shabbily-dressed people to be seen on it, and in no essential does the Bowery differ from other busy thoroughfares. Even at night—with only a minimum of resorts open—the Bowery always disappoints a frisky sightseer.

The "yellow" danger of the Bowery does not parade on the sidewalks; it cannot be found in the many rumshops, but creeps, like a stealthy, poisonous germ, into the very hearts and minds of men, who, in the end, become actually fascinated with this repelling Bohemia of the nether world. It is their mental attitude, or, rather, their moral and mental deficiency, that makes these men mere milestones on the miserable highway. I know, and you know, how we are influenced by our environment, in spite of normal brains and bodies. What, then, shall be said of the man who, unbalanced by some unexpected happening, receives a little push from Fate, is unable to resist it, and shoots down the chute of misery to its very bottom? Stunned by his descent, he crawls to the first resting-place. Something has snapped within him, as it were; he looks about him, and does not feel the horror of

his situation, is but mildly surprised at his emotion, and mutters to himself: "Oh, what's the use of making an effort to-day to get away from here? I'll do that to-morrow."

But lo! to-morrow he is infected by the germ that makes the men of the Bowery mere shadows of the spectre-world—men who are dead, but unburied, who, like the bats of subterranean passages, are flitting aimlessly in constant gloom, gazing backward on dead conditions, unwilling to face about and enter a kindly future.

It is not profitable to deal in generalities when facts, solid facts, are close at hand. The tidal wave of political controversy which appears about a month before election delights in juggling with the term "floating population." It is a misnomer, when applied to the Bowery. A "has-been" might "float" from one house to the one next door; but he never, once there, floats away from the Bowery. That is known to every politician, who feels himself in duty bound to throw the accusation of utilising the "floating population" to overcome the opposing faction. It is merely a trick in the trade of patriotic statesmanship.

The statesman! As the Romans clothed the men of wisdom and love of country in the flowing robes of dignity and called them "senators," so do we take—take by the will of the people—the men, fat of jowl and rotund of body, from beneath us, place

them above us in the seats of the mighty, and give them power over us. Should a man growl because I say "from beneath us . . . and give them power over us," and should he wrathfully confront me with the lacerated slogan of political and other equality, I would not wish to stand in the way of his claim of being their equal, but would have trifling respect for his integrity. As I tell the stars by seeing them, and find but small difference in their lustre, so do I tell the rascals by their rascality, and there is small difference in the degrees of rascality. Engineered by these statesmen, we have the pitiful spectacle every year of seeing men who have lost the last vestige of will-power coaxed into the belief that, for once, they are exercising their own sovereign will to perform the most important duty of citizenship. That most of the "has-beens" are intoxicated on election day is, perhaps, a coincidence.

The term "floating population" belongs distinctively to the Bowery, though, on rare occasions, it is also applied to other localities. "Floating population" and "lodging-house population" have become synonymous. The lodging houses being the abodes—they cannot be called the "homes"—of the "has-beens," it behooves us to examine their condition and numerical strength.

The "lodging-house population" is one well worthy of a politician's attention. From Brooklyn

Bridge to Cooper Union, a distance of about two miles, there are over one hundred lodging houses. A lodging house, to be a paying investment, must shelter at least two hundred and fifty men. Many houses, notably the Mills Hotel and the Salvation Army Hotel, exceed that figure by several hundreds. The most conservative estimate places the number of men who sleep in the Bowery every night at fifty thousand. This does not include the storekeepers and their families, who live on the floors above the shops. Barely two miles of street and fifty thousand homeless men to people it! Is it any wonder that the wily politicians, who control the "lodging-house vote," are the most powerful of their party?

Lodging houses are not run from philanthropic motives. They are business agencies, like other hotels, and competitive rivalry results in keeping the houses in fair sanitary condition. Some of them are almost excessively so in their use of disinfectants. Such places fairly reek with a pungent, sharp smell, and with every breath one inhales doses of aromas of a germ-killing nature, which, no doubt, are healthful, but far from agreeable.

The doorways of these houses are graced by shining glass plates stating the name and rate of each hotel. Above each plate swings a transparency, on which again the name and rate are given. Besides this notice there is another which should

at once remove all lodging-house patrons beyond the pale of criticism. Here is a front door sign:

"The Norwood. Single bed, ten cents; single room, fifteen cents, per night. For Gentlemen only!"

Is there a fashionable hotel which would or could guarantee all its guests to be "gentlemen," even at their extravagant rates. Hardly! Here, on the Bowery, provided his dime is accepted, the lodger has his social standing blazoned from a glaring sign.

The payment of his ten or fifteen cents entitles the guest to all the conveniences the house affords. Very few houses, if any, are without bathing facilities. Some have both shower and tub baths. Washstands and a plenitude of towels are on every floor. The sanitary condition is rigidly enforced by the health department. Whisk brooms, clothes brushes, and shoe brushes are hanging on stout chains in convenient places. The clerk, the foster-father of his homeless charges, has many conveniences to distribute. Pins, needles, thread, buttons, and even patches; also writing material can be had.

The social life of the guests is looked after by the proprietor. After ascending the stairs, covered with oilcloth and trimmed with shining brass, we find ourselves in the reading or sitting-room. In the most conspicuous place stands the office, a cage-like affair, affording a complete sur-

vey to the clerk on duty. Solid wooden tables, chairs, and benches furnish the room. Indistinct ornamentations and very distinctly printed rules decorate it.

The following is an exact copy of a table of rules and regulations, not without its subtle irony:

1.—This room is open for guests only from 6 A. M. to 11.30 P. M.

2.—Loud talking, whistling, or profanity is not allowed. Guests must not discuss religion or politics.

3.—Dominoes, checkers, or chess can be had at the office, and must be returned. Gambling for money is strictly prohibited.

4.—All beds and rooms must be paid for in advance. No money refunded.

5.—Intoxicated persons will not be permitted in the house at any time.

6.—The proprietor will not be responsible for clothing, goods, or personal effects left in the rooms.

7.—A safe for jewelry, money, and valuables is provided in the office.

8.—Guests occupying rooms should bolt and lock their doors before retiring.

9.—Keys must be left at the office.

10.—No trust whatever.

THE PROPRIETOR.

Here I must guard you against stumbling into an erroneous impression. Although the sign, the transparency, and the table of rules emphasise the importance of the "room," it is but a poor one. A "room" in a lodging house is a rather dismal thing. A wooden partition, eight feet high, incloses

the "room." The inside space is seven feet by five feet. Between the cot and the opposite partition there is just room enough for a closet one foot square for clothes. This, as a rule, is all the furniture contained in a "room"—called a "box-stall" by the *habitués*—only a few houses augmenting it by a stool. To insure the occupant of a room against unwelcome calls from his neighbours, heavy wire netting "tops" the "room" partitions. The "single beds" are in large dormitories.

This is the *scenarium* for the tragedy of the "has-beens." With all its meagreness, cheapness, and other drawbacks, the physical character of the environment is not the worst it could be, for a modicum of cleanliness is to be found everywhere, but the moral atmosphere, or rather its absence, is the thing of horror.

The average earnings of a working "has-been" never exceed a dollar a day. Thousands of them earn only fifty cents, a weekly total of three dollars, which sum must feed, clothe, and house them. It is done and can be done readily on their plane of life.

Seventy cents pays for a week's lodging. To eat more than twice a day is not deemed necessary. On Park Row and the Bowery are several cellar restaurants where five cents procures a "square meal." The meals are not totally bad, and the bill-of-fare is quite pretentious. Pork and beans, pea

soup, stew, hash, and hard-boiled eggs comprise the *menu,* and with each item four slices of bread and a bowl of coffee are served. " Has-beens " who are out of work or who belong to the positively idle class resort to the penny soup stands, where a cup of soup, or a cup of coffee, and one slice of bread, are sold for a cent. Two meals, at five cents a day, bring the board bill up to seventy cents for the week. Subtracting this, as well as the hotel bill, from the original sum of three dollars, the " has-been " finds himself the possessor of the substantial balance of one dollar and sixty cents. Free barber schools, where apprentices to the barber's trade perfect themselves, take care of a " has-been's " tonsorial effectiveness. His hair is cut and his beard shaved off for no other expense than a few occasional drops of blood or a bit of skin. His laundry work is done by himself at his lodging house. If the wardrobe needs replenishing, the old-clothes market, where sales occur daily, at Bayard and Elizabeth Streets, is visited. Pieces of wearing apparel, hats, shoes, and linen, not good enough to be bought by the second-hand dealers, who have first choice of the wares brought from uptown by the " old clo'es " peddlers, are offered on the street corner, and are passed from hand to hand until bought for a mere pittance. After a purchase, a " has-been " makes the necessary repairs, and feels a real satisfaction in his bargain.

The sitting-rooms of the lodging-houses, from the time of opening to the time of closing, are never vacant. Shortly after they are opened the wanderers of the night creep in to take stolen naps. They are a pitiful crew—the "banner-carriers." Night after night, at the closing hour of the sitting-rooms, this troop of sorry shadows steps into the street to wear away long hours in the silence of their undying memories. Some of these men sit in the sheltering room all day after the weary travel of the night before. I have known men who had not slept in a bed for a week. They are the "has-beens" who have stepped down from the "comforts" of their own world into that deplorable condition in which men merely wait around to die.

They start—uptown, downtown, crosstown—who cares where—so long as time is killed, until the morning hour. Some walk in couples, others walk alone, with naught for company excepting their thoughts. Stops are made here and there, for even at night charitable people are not entirely unmindful of these drifting beings. Thousands of loaves of bread are dispensed by several large bakeries after the sun has folded his golden wings, and even coffee or some other warming drink is given. By night or by day, a "has-been" need not starve, and it is claimed by some that that is one of the reasons for his being a "has-been." He knows that he can always find food somewhere and snatch a bit of

sleep now and then, but the one unfailing condition that brings a man to his senses is hunger. It can bridge the awful chasm between desperation and chance with more precision than anything else I know of, for it clings to one more inexorably than the gadfly clung to Io.

When men live from hand to mouth, as these people do, a shortness in finances is easily incurred. These embarrassing periods are not without moment to both the lodging house keeper and the lodger. Every proprietor is a political captain, and if you will note that some of them own as many as ten houses, you will understand the significance of their power. They are in close touch with their lodgers, and, being keen judges of human nature, know how to sift their material.

Ten cents is a small sum, yet when it stands between one and his bed for the night it has the conjuring power of making a time-worn cot as inviting as the canopied couch of a monarch. It may be raining—perhaps snowing; in the rules of the house there is the threatening clause, "No trust whatever," but you are courageous from despair and ask the proprietor to "trust" you just for one night. He listens, and, seeing that you are in straits and making sure that you have a vote, he grants the request and, for once, the petitioner is spared the harrowing experience of "carrying the banner."

Is it surprising that a man who has been rescued

from a pitiless storm and saved from a "bedless" night by the proprietor will have a feeling closely akin to gratitude as he slips under the shabby blankets? Perhaps he is compelled to ask his landlord's indulgence several times during the year, and when election day comes he, oppressed by his debt of obligations, readily obeys the command of his captain, who, besides having been kind to him, saves him the trouble of thinking.

Many lodgers, without regard to the difference in the price, prefer the large dormitories to the stuffy wooden "rooms." Let us visit a dormitory—the place where the lesser brethren seek their slumber. It is an immense room, accommodating about one hundred men. All beds must be vacated by eleven o'clock, to permit the cleaners and "bedmakers" to perform their work. Every available window is opened, and brooms and scrubbing brushes are vigorously applied. Beds are turned upside down, and, after being aired for an hour or two, are covered with clean linen. They are then ready for the next occupants. In the late afternoon everything is in shape, and the proprietor, inspecting the condition of the dormitory, is justified in challenging criticism. The smell of soap and of disinfectants hangs in the air, and you are forced to admit that the place is very clean. The beds are in four measured rows from wall to wall, with an exact space, prescribed by law, between. It does not re-

quire a great deal of imagination to find a simile for the quiet, untenanted place. Does it not resemble a graveyard? It does, and, more's the pity, it is one.

Each cot, the mound above dead hopes and ambitions, waits but the midnight hour to mock the waning spirit of its prisoner. Yes, these are cruel beds. On their hard pillows many a tear has fallen, and from them many "has-beens" have started for the great unknown. Still, they each night benumb victims into drowsiness to have their sport of dreams with them. The day aspect suggests the horror; the scene at night shows it in all its hideousness.

The long room, never brilliantly lighted, is in almost complete darkness. Just one dim, flickering flame of gas makes feeble resistance against the blackish gloom. But with each draught coming from the stairway the shadows dance on the walls as if swaying with an overhanging pall. The order of the beds is gone, and in its stead are rows of twisting, squirming bodies. Yes, it is quiet, and, therefore, the sudden noises falling on one's ear are so much the more accentuated.

Here a strong, young, and well-proportioned lodger, after a day spent in idleness, feels now in slumber the energy left unawakened during the day. His muscles swell, his chest heaves heavily with some dreamed-of exertion, and the "has-

been" is his former self at the midnight hour in the dormitory. There one is wrestling with his waning intoxication. He mutters, growls, and curses soft or loud, while in his face no intellect can be traced. No "has-been" can claim to have a normal mind; if he further deadens it with poisonous fusel oil, he cannot blame his face for showing the reflection. One's eyes often speak louder than the voice.

Dreams are magicians of no small degree. In yonder darkened corner, a man, grey-haired and on in years, sleeps fairly restful sleep, for he has rested on this cot for many years—a veteran "has-been." Yet even he is not without his fantasies. A smile flits about his mouth, and ever an anon he mumbles softly a name which you feel was once to him the dearest one on this earth. A few more hours will pass, and, with his waking, he will be many, many years distant from the scenes which, in his slumber, he lived over again.

Not all are wrapped in the veil of sleep, no matter how comfortless. From a cot, not far from the solitary gas jet, two dark, wide-open eyes are staring at the ceiling. No sleep has come or will come to him. A new recruit, but recently arrived, he is yet stunned from his descent, while conscience is making the last efforts to save him from the fate before him. He spends his night by sneering at destiny, without once resorting to the best of all

relief—prayer. Though his eyes are open, he is blind to all the fleeting shadows born of the flickering flare, and deaf even to the rasping noises about him, for throughout the room, from many, many a bed, there comes the sound of a hacking, hollow cough—the herald of a life's last lapse.

Often we have our sympathies stirred by a realistic tale of prison misery. I do not wish to detract one iota from the charity spent on the inmates of our jails, but, for one, I can see no more pitiful sight about me than this moaning midnight sea of sighs and sobs and suffering. The men here have sinned only against themselves, and they are here, many of them apparently hale, hearty, and intelligent, just because a little cog slipped in their moral make-up.

It is at night, either at his "hang-out," or in the sitting-room of the lodging house, that we can get the true picture of the "has-beens." Then, because he lives over pieces of his past, you can discern what he was once.

Beginning with the afternoon the sitting-room becomes crowded with patrons of the lodging house. A few play dominoes or checkers, but most of them prefer to talk. They form into groups and have their own particular corners where they hold their nightly meetings. Some weighty matters of moment are weighed in their sodden brains, and they live in the glory of a soap-bubble importance.

I have often listened to their conversation, and as frequently have learned something from them. To this very day a group composed of ex-representatives of several professions meets every evening in the sitting-room of a fifteen-cent lodging house. Of the six, two have been lawyers, one a physician, one a brilliant editorial writer, one a professor of literature and recognised authority on Shakespeare, with several books to his credit; the last, a colonel of a Southern regiment during the Civil War, and since then president of various banks and corporations.

Their shabbiness and deep-lined features are not noticed by anyone who has an opportunity to listen to them. The shafts of wit are brilliant, the repartee is swift and caustic, the diction is a model of linguistic accomplishment, and one becomes forgetful of the surroundings and personalities of the scene. Yet, in it all, the rightly sounding note is missing. They all talk of "When I was," "When I had," or "When I did"—all tales of yesterday, none of care for the morrow. They live in the past; they are blind, deaf, stolid, and indifferent to the great glories of the future. They all chat and babble of the days behind them, and veritable epics of the past are sung. One speaks with awkward tenderness of mother, wife, and children, perhaps not seen in years, and in his uncouth way he shows all the remnant of the better feeling still harboured

in his heart. Another, of more material turn of mind, tells of the meals and feasts which mother "used to cook," and which he "used to have," when he "used to live at home."

By every two, or three, or larger group of these men of yesterday, the requiem of the "has-been" is chanted in its dull minor key. It is not hopelessness, or resignation; it is absolute indifference which tones the monotony of a "has-been's" life.

His first duty of the day is to procure his "bed-money" for the coming night. After that is obtained he "takes chances on his grub." Of course, this only pertains to the "has-beens" who have absolutely no means of procuring a precarious living. They are the men who make the gruesome, living statues hanging to lampposts, reclining against sunshiny patches of outer walks, with dreamy, unseeing eyes, or bleared and befuddled by the aftermath of their "good times" of the night before.

Again let me emphasise the fact that most of these men come from social and intellectual spheres far removed from a Bowery level. I know a man who, to my personal knowledge, has led the existence of a "has-been" for twelve years. In all that time his appearance has seemingly remained the same. If he has changed his hat it must have been an exchange of his very old head-covering for one just a trifle less old. Winter and summer the same

short overcoat hangs upon his gaunt figure. His hair and beard are always in the same tangled mass. During the day he is not a whit different from other tramps or hoboes. Then, his "bed money" obtained, he mopes about in morose and sullen silence. But with the coming of the artificial glimmer of evening, that streams adown the highways, a brighter sparkle creeps into his eyes, his form grows more erect, and he strides forth to one of those hell-kitchens on the Bowery that thrive and ruin and brazen in spite of the milk-and-water protests made against them at long intervals. There the constituents of the lowest, the most fearful scum, masquerading in the guise of human beings, pass many hours, and, after spending their pittance—mostly pennies, watch for some straggling Samaritan inclined to keep ablaze the fire of forgetfulness kindled within them.

This environment, with its reeking stench and degraded faces, has become a necessity to the "has-been" in question. Night after night he sits at the soiled table, his listless air of the day supplanted by a certain dash of bearing, and speaks and lectures to the crowd around him of Greek, Roman, Chaldaic, and Hebrew literature and history as he did in the days when he was a celebrity in Germany and professor at the University of Heidelberg. Chance acquaintances of different social shifts have often offered him opportunities to put his attainments to

good use. First he accepted these offers, but always returned. Now, when they are made, he only smile and gives the stereotyped reply:

"I am all right. I sleep, eat, and drink, sometimes and as often as possible—what more do I need? My life is the essence of a philosophical existence. I'm done with what you call the 'striving life.'"

And there are many, many who, like our professor, have attainments, skill, and perfect training in their particular professions, and yet they waste, and persist in wasting, every minute and hour of their lives. They sing and live their requiem, and with the selfishness of unfelt misery have lazily formed a world within a world for themselves.

But a few weeks ago I saw a man at a corner of Canal Street and the Bowery. I had known him for years—a man of not more than thirty-five years, of which at least five had been wasted on the Bowery. His position at the moment was characteristic of his class. It was late in the afternoon. Over the houstops the homing sun shone his dull, tired farewell after a day of blazing toil. A target for the golden rays, the "has-been" stood in the focus of their sheen.

To stand squarely on one's feet, one must use an infinitesimal particle of exertion. Therefore the "has-been," being what he was, leaned, yes, lay, against a lamppost. His hands were in his pockets,

and his unshaven face was lifted to such an angle as also to find a resting-place for a cheek against the iron post. His eyes—unseeing eyes—gazed straight into the departing orb of day.

There was a doubt. Why not give him the benefit of it? Perhaps, I hoped, instead of idly loafing, he was making a determined effort at rehabilitation and pledging himself to greet the sinking sun on the morrow with the energy of one long ill and ailing, but now anxious for work—glorious, honest work—with all the desire of a delayed convalescence.

I spoke to him. My question had to be repeated three times before he slowly turned his head in my direction. He listened to my hopeful expression as if I had spoken to him in a foreign tongue.

"Don't you know any better than to talk to me of work?" he asked listlessly, without even a shadow of anger. "What would I work for? I lost the knack of my trade, and, besides, I eat and sleep more or less, as it is, so what is the use of going back to work? Besides, I would have to chase around for about two days before I could find a job."

The pity, the bitter pity of it is that this is not a manufactured speech, formed to illustrate my point. It was spoken to me almost *verbatim* by a man skilled in the trade of an engraver, one of certainly average intelligence and of normal body.

But the mind was one from which normality had gone and where nothing reigns but the indifference of a "has-been." It is a curse, this indifference. Hopelessness, despair, and dissatisfaction entail a degree of mental activity—but indifference is like a mind's Sahara without a horizon.

Do not think me unfeeling or too harsh when I speak of the "has-beens." I feel for them, and am sorry for them; still, I am not blind to their condition. If there is one point on which I cannot express myself convincingly, it is on that of how to help them. It is a glorious fact that much is done on the East Side for children and young men. There are settlements, schools, clubs, and institutions to teach them how to learn and how to play. But little is done for the "has-been."

From Brooklyn Bridge to Cooper Union there are only two places on the Bowery where religious services are held. Both places are doing splendid work along their special lines. One is the Bowery Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Its avowed purpose is to help the man who, through some misfortune or *mistake,* has reached the edge of the abyss, to right himself again by the best medium possible—work. A "has-been," however, is too far gone down the incline to be considered a fit subject for the moral instillation of the Bowery Branch. It would not be right to place the recent

arrival on the same level with the seasoned "has-beens."

The other place is the famous old Bowery Mission, named elsewhere, by me, the Church of Sinners. It opens its doors every night for the lowest of the low. Whatever the ingenuity of Mrs. Sarah Bird and Mr. Hallimond can suggest to make the evening services more attractive is done. But, alas! the main work of this mission is on the religious side of the "has-been's" life, for the funds are not at hand to help him in any other way.

Thus the threads of many lives run into hopeless tangles in this social phase, and you and I sorrow, grieve, pity, and pray, perhaps, but what else do we do to change the requiem of the "has-been" into a newer, better song of hope?

II

THE HARD LIFE

SEVERAL occupations in the city are exclusively followed by the "has-beens." There are the "sign-carriers"—the walking advertisements; the men who distribute circulars and pamphlets; barroom cleaners, whose wages are generally of a liquid nature; coalmen, who travel the streets in search of a ton of coal to be "put in"; the penmen, who grind away at addressing envelopes; the lunchmen, who prepare the free "spreads" in the gin-mills; the firemen, who attend to the fires in the smaller boarding houses; the dinner-waiters, who work for two or three hours during the rush of noon in down-town lunchrooms; and men of other similar and diversified callings.

The great majority of the "has-beens"—especially the men of the collars and cuffs—will not "stoop" to manual labour, but prefer to depend on the "chances" of the great city. This does not imply that they steal or beg for a living. However, every one of this latter class would steal if it were not for the required nerve and courage; and as to

begging, years of the "hard life" do ultimately graduate them into professional mendicancy. But in the transitory stage they merely help luck to come their way.

Wall Street, Broadway, and the shopping district are favourite localities for "making findings." There sidewalks and gutters are carefully watched for lost articles. The "find" of one day is likely to keep the finder above want for several weeks. Then it is not unprofitable to hang about saloons frequented by the sporting fraternity. A man who has unexpectedly won a considerable amount of money without having to work for it is very apt to throw some of his change to the birds—or vultures. Again, at points of interest to strangers "has-beens" can always be found. They are exceedingly easy of approach, brimful with reliable and interesting information, and are not above accepting a small fee for their really valuable services. During the theatrical season, too, these men find pleasure and profit in "assisting" in great productions requiring many "supers." Some but a trifle distant from the final *dénouement* employ a form of mute pleading in front of eating houses or anywhere where cheer is the prevailing tone. They flaunt their misery, assume a pathetically sad look, and are ready, at the slightest provocation, to unroll their tale of woe—for a consideration. In short, the "has-been" will do anything but work regu-

larly and steadily for a full weekly or daily wage. He cannot be induced to give up his life of the underworld Bohemia for an existence of real usefulness and responsibility.

A man's presence in a Bowery lodging-house is testimony of his irresponsibility, and he who can be controlled or restrained by a just responsibility is a subject of ridicule to the "has-been," who has learned how easy life can be made—when one wants to live it for one's self alone.

The "hard life"—in physical activity—is the life of to-day. The day of the moment is lived and accepted by itself, without any connecting relations to yesterday or to-morrow. In mental activity it is the life of yesterday, letting the future take care of itself and depending on the echoes of the past for its sole relaxation. And that—this abject, weak submission to a self-incurred fate—is the real hardness of the life.

To claim that the Bowery makes "has-beens" is an assertion needing qualification. It is probable that, were lodging-houses unknown on the Bowery, the present standing army of 50,000 would not be there—but elsewhere, and together. The spirit of gregariousness is rampant among the "has-beens," and they will gather and rally together no matter where the tents may be pitched. Also, wherever they settle, lodging house, cheap restaurants, and low gin-mills—"dead houses"—will spring up like

mushrooms. Of course, the blame for furnishing beds and sitting-rooms for the use of the "has-beens" lies with the lodging-house keeper. But would you want the men to be shelterless as well as homeless?

Voluntary and involuntary outcasts will be a part of the city's population so long as present social conditions are in force. What, then, is offered them by us, the city and citizens? Only a municipal lodging-house, with accommodations for barely 200, to take care of the scum of over 3,000,000 people! Beds, bunks, cots—call them what you may—can be had on the Bowery for as little as five cents a night, and because there are men who have lost the faculty of earning, begging, or borrowing even that sum, a nocturnal procession of over 10,000 parades in our streets—winter and summer—from midnight until dawn.

You are inclined to disbelieve my figures? Very well, come with me, and I will show you 1000 men clamouring, night after night, for entrance to the Bowery Mission, where at 1 A. M. an early breakfast is served to this 1000 from December until the summer months. From there we will go to the "bread-line" on Broadway, where several hundreds of these spectres are waiting patiently for their loaf of bread given to them by Fleischman's bakery. Schuman's bakery, with several hundred in line, comes next. Then, in the same radius of

ten blocks, we will go to the docks and lumber yards and find hundreds, huddled like bundles of refuse, drowsing in out-of-the-way places. To accumulate additional proof, we will ask the workers in the small bakeshops how many have whined their dirge of misery down those basement stairs that night. Homeward bound, we will make our way across one or two of the smaller parks and find—like poisonous weeds—these creatures clinging to every bench. Arrived at home, we will feel depressed, but at breakfast we will be too busy with our own affairs to give much thought to the "has-beens" of old yesterday.

We cannot turn this question aside, or class it under the convenient heading of "results of drink." I have met in the "hard life" men who did not know the taste of drink, but who, by moral shock or in some other way, had their mental balance upset and had shot the chutes of fate down to the very dregs without offering the least resistance. Stunned by their slide, they remained at the bottom long enough to become infected with the awful pest of deadly lassitude, which kept them to the ground, helpless, creeping bacilli in the slime of moral neglect.

Little enough is done for the "has-beens," but even that would bring occasional results were there a mutual desire for rehabilitation. If the man whom we would help would work with us in re-

deeming him the task would be possible; but the percentage of those who will do this is not worth mentioning. Let that germ of the easy "hard life," of the clubdom of the slums get into the being of a man who has landed on the highway of the foolish and wicked, and he will fall a ready victim to that grasping disease—indifference.

Not even the Mussulman has a greater indifference to the haphazard turns of fate than the man of the Bowery who suffers from this indifference. It cannot be called hopelessness, because hopelessness involves a certain amount of mental activity to realise its existence. It is a drifting, sliding to nowhere. All things of life, the parts of life, come to these men in the way of surprises. Their sustenance does not depend on their efforts, but merely on their "luck."

What is done to counteract this spreading disease? In a number of lodging-house reading-rooms the printed cards of St. Augustine Chapel in East Houston Street, and of the Broome Street Tabernacle, inviting men to the services, are displayed. At odd times a well-meaning missionary may invade the sitting-rooms to distribute a number of leaflets; and a small band from the Mariners' Temple holds a brief song-service on Sunday afternoon in the sitting-room of the Dakota lodging-house. This is all the work for the amelioration of this most discouraging social phase that I have seen

in my thirty-odd years on the Bowery. Of course, there are missions and missionary churches, and the men would only have to go to them to be made welcome, but——

We had a "tough" winter last year. Work was scarce and snow was plentiful. The snow had to be removed, which gave work to many. Although previous efforts to put "has-beens" to work had resulted disastrously, I made arrangements for a number of men to shovel snow at fair wages. I went from lodging-house to lodging-house, and succeeded, eventually, in getting about half of the required number of men, and they did not come willingly, but had to be coaxed, dragged, and driven to work. Yet every sitting-room visited by me was packed to suffocation by men who barely had money enough for that night's lodging, and who should have jumped at the chance of earning an honest dollar. Do you think these men will find sufficient persuasion in the printed card of a church to be drawn to the services? A few might be induced to come if you would offer them a cup of tea and a sandwich with your sermon.

III

THE BURDEN OF THE HEAVY-LADEN

EVERYTHING which concerns my own people—the people who live in the slums or on the Bowery, the Highway of the Foolish and Miserable—is my concern by birthright and choice. There are other spheres of people, some of them "worse off," some of them "better off," than my own, but I am not familiar with them, and it is not my custom to discuss or write of things about which I am ignorant.

At the outset I must confess that I am strongly biassed in the matter to which I am going to call your attention. Some of my opinions, coloured by my feelings, may shock you, but the facts I am going to tell you must believe, because I have either witnessed or experienced them. I will go further. Read what I shall write, and then, if you can prove that I have told a falsehood, I shall be ready, for your sake, for my own, and for that of my fellows of the slums, to make all possible reparation. But do not come to me with "Oh, that can't be!" and put your sentiment and inclination against the testimony of my eyes and ears.

About the time when the wily politician is hustling around for campaign funds, another kind of emissary is also busy pleading for funds for carrying on his campaign—the campaign of salvation. I do not know which side—the religious or the political—is most successful in attaining its financial ends, but I do know that the money secured for Christian endeavours is considerable and enough to accomplish vast results—if it were properly administered.

It is an old and frequently quoted saying that New York is the most charitable city in the world. While I have no positive proof to that effect, I believe it to be true, and, also, that the charitably inclined are not permitted to deem themselves forgotten. Most religious institutions of a reformatory character have authorised canvassers whose daily business it is to solicit subscriptions of money. These canvassers are paid by a percentage of their collections, and those that I know are making an exceedingly comfortable living. Besides these financial agents, institutions, caring for their inmates, have canvassers for "soliciting" food and everything else needed for the large households. To offset this "soliciting," most of these institutions have been asserting for years and years to their boards of trustees and directors that they were in fair way of becoming self-supporting. One who will view the situation carefully will find that, seem-

ingly, business sense and Christianity are incompatible. This is further emphasised by the few splendid exceptions like the Young Men's Christian Association. But wherever the work is founded on hysterical emotion, it is carried on by incompetents and falls short of accomplishing its purpose —the true man-making of the fallen.

I will yield to no one in my understanding of the one grand, sublime *motif* underlying all the efforts made to save my fellow-men from utter perdition; and I, as well as you, know that it all is inspired by the call of Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But I cannot refrain from pointing out to you where the original good intention is often twisted by inefficiency, or, alas! sometimes, by worse than that—at the expense of the millionaire's subscription and of the widow's treasured mite, and at the expense of the souls of the hundredths of the ninety and nines.

Let us spend an evening at a mission of the slums.

The Broadway and Bowery of the Fourth Ward is Catherine Street. It runs from Chatham Square to the East River, crossing Water and Cherry Streets, and is famed for its tough dives. The ward itself is so well established in its notoriety that any further comment from me is unnecessary. The streets of the district are peopled with thugs, petty and daring thieves, loafers, and men who are en-

deavouring to prolong their existence by living by their wits. Along the river, in South Street, hundreds of 'longshoremen hang about when not working at loading or unloading vessels. In addition, the ward has always a quota of transient sailors. All these different classes of men are supposed to be hurrying along the path to the brimstone region. Among them a missionary force should find a great field for work, and—there is a mission there.

It is not a bad-looking building and is much neater than its neighbours. The ground floor is the meeting-room. The upper floors contain the free dispensary and the living-rooms of the ladies in charge. These ladies, sweet and refined women, are sisters. One is a physician and in charge of the dispensary; the other, after having been the manager of a restaurant attached to an institution uptown, is now the superintendent of the evangelical work.

At the time I visited this mission I was a staff writer for the New York *Herald,* and especially assigned to ascertain what good—if any—is accomplished by these rescue missions in reforming the "has-beens. It was left to my own option whether to make myself known or not. I remained *incognito,* and visited the mission every night for a week.

The exterior of the building was not very attractively illuminated, so the superintendent stood in

front of the door to hand cards of invitation to those passing by. Yet this seemed hardly necessary, as the congregation was very prompt and quickly filled the not too spacious room as soon as the doors were opened. It did not take me long to ascertain that the congregation was not drawn from the neighbouring slums, but was recruited from the Bowery—a mile distant. This is one of the most peculiar features about the rescue missions—that they do not seem to attract the vicious male element of their immediate neighbourhoods, but depend mostly on a certain, regular crowd of "has-beens," which is well represented and easily recognised in every place where other things besides the Word are offered.

Until the entrance of the superintendent from the circular distribution on the sidewalk a form of singing was kept up. From five to nine hymns were sung, and, although about sixty men were present, the volume of sound was very disappointing. Half of the congregation was asleep, tired from the effects of travel on the preceding night.

Eventually the meeting would be opened with prayer by one of the old converts—usually the janitor, organist, or care-taker of the Home—designated by the superintendent. After that would come two more hymns, and then the reading of a text from the Bible, to be followed with a dissertation on it by some invited friend. Only two of the

seven *pro tempore* speakers heard by me confined themselves to interpreting the message of the Gospel; the others seemed to have unlimited faith in the convincing power of their tirades and spoke for fully thirty minutes to a room full of sinners—about themselves and what they were and had accomplished—giving, occasionally, some credit to the Creator. After the close of the talk two or three more hymns were sung, and then the meeting was thrown open for testimonials. I have seen some terrible instances of degradation, but it remained for a rescue mission to afford me an opportunity of observing to what depths some men can sink.

A feature about these testimonials, which, in my humble opinion, should be discouraged, is the energy with which some of the men tear their past characters to pieces. It is emphasised every night from every mission platform that our Saviour can save each and every sinner, no matter how low or wicked, and yet some will fairly gloat over the ghoulish incidents of their pasts. I have heard men tell of beating their wives, of fighting with stray dogs and cats for the scraps of refuse barrels for food, of being driven to the edge of insanity by the vermin on their bodies, and of other nauseating things, to make the contrast between "then" and "now" greater. I have also heard many "amens" and "hallelujahs" come from the platform and the congregation as an accompaniment to these tales of

horror. Is there any real necessity for all this hysteria? Is it wise to encourage these men in whining about their past sinful days? There is still a shred of manhood left in some of the men listening to those testimonies, and they will not feel stirred or moved by such alluring vistas. If the echo of that call for the heavy-laden cannot bring sinners to His feet, the telling of those Dantesque narratives will never do it.

After the testimonies came the "invitation," extended by the organist. Its leading strain was, "Stop drinking, become one of us, and you will eat oftener than you do now, will wear cleaner linen, and, perhaps, get a job." The superintendent who had occupied a seat in the rear of the room, went out into the street before the invitation closed with, "Who'll be the first to come forward?"

It was always hard to decide who was the first to go forward. They fairly rushed to the seats reserved for the unconverted. When I first saw this a thrill went through me. I had sat through a most dispiriting meeting. Nothing of convincing force or breathing the spirit of brotherly love had been uttered, and yet these men were changed in a twinkling from lethargic, sleepy drowsers into fervid seekers after true righteousness. But alas! this impression was not permitted to last long.

While the sinners were arranging themselves in kneeling positions along the front row of chairs,

the organist stepped from the platform and began to turn out the lights and to open the windows to let the putrefied air escape. To do this he had to pass through the aisles and was buttonholed by the men who had testified. He knew most of them by name and handed each a small card entitling the bearer to the use of a bed for one night at the Home. A few who had not testified also pressed forward and begged for tickets, but were invited to get out as quickly as possible. With the remainder of the tickets in his hand, the organist then approached the sinners, still on their knees in expectant silence.

They had been undisturbed until then. No one had spoken a word to them. An old convert who had spoken feelingly of the "poor sinners—God bless them! I was once one of them"—was standing close beside the row of sinners, wrapping himself in his snug overcoat. I felt that he would step to the nearest man kneeling and say: "Brother, let us shake hands; I am poor, but I have Christ. I have learned to love Him and am ready to help you in your first steps in His path. Let me welcome you into the new and better life."

But no; not a word escaped him, and with a self-satisfied smirk he went on his homeward way. Why were those men left so entirely to themselves? Were the missionaries unfeeling and neglectful, or did they know of the true motive of those men on

"WITH A TICKET BEFORE HIM, CAN YOU NOT GUESS HIS ANSWER?"

their knees? Neither answer can be very flattering to the missionaries.

When the organist got to the front row he stepped from one to another, and, after touching them on the shoulder, scrutinised their features. How he formed his judgment I do not know, as his only inquiry was "Do you want to be a Christian?"

The man questioned would see before him the ticket, saving him from a night in the streets, and—can you not guess his answer?

As soon as the last ticket had been given out, the organist spoke again. "That's all for to-night. The rest of you 've got to go home." It was merely a figure of speech, for he did not mean to be ironical; but their homes—why, they were forfeited long ago—and their brethren who had obtained shelter for the night had done so by the most fearful of lies—by selling their souls for a night's rest.

The splendid, well-meaning woman who gives so much to the support of this mission attends there once a week, and then, by a peculiar coincidence, everything and everybody brighten up. The superintendent forsakes her seat in the rear and joins the guests on the platform, the hymns are played and sung with greater swing, the testimonies are more elaborated—most of them containing a reference to the patroness on the platform—and even more gas jets are lighted. But the men, the sin-

ners, are there for the same purpose as usual—to be "saved" by the bribe of a bed-ticket.

At the end of my investigation I sought official corroboration. I spoke to the organist.

"Do you think the men are really converted by one night's service such as this? Can a single shower of rain change a leopard's spots?"

"I'm afraid you're not a Christian," was his smiling reply, without an effort to convert me. "Why, of course they are converted. There is enough in that blessed Book"—he pointed at the Bible on the platform—"to convert the whole world."

He spoke a glorious truth; still, on that evening, just eleven words had been read to us as a text from the Book.

"Why don't you give tickets to some of the other men?"

"Because they're not saved yet. We've got to look out for our young Christians first."

He pointed to the men who had just risen from the penitent form.

"How do you know that these men are Christians now?"

"Because they came forward and knelt down."

"Oh, I see. And will they get tickets to-morrow night?"

"Yes, if they are still Christians and have not fallen into temptation."

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"But how will you know whether they are Christians or not?"

"If they're Christians, they'll testify."

I passed into the street and encountered the superintendent, to whom I introduced myself.

"Would you like to tell me something about your work here?" I asked.

"I am afraid I cannot. You see, Mrs. B—— is really the only supporter of this mission, and, naturally, receives regular reports concerning it. You should interview her. It would be more tactful, and she is a splendid lady and will give you all the necessary information."

There is no doubt about it, but Mrs. B—— only sees the mission once a week, and has no other means of information than those reports; and reports, like statistics, are poor, feeble things. I would not like to be misunderstood in this matter, but in the pursuit of saving men's souls frankness has a rightful province.

The statistics of Christian work are very satisfactory in their numerical strength, at first glance. A record of the conversions is kept by every mission and other organisation given to the rescuing of men. Foot up the grand totals of these records and you will be in duty bound to conclude that New York City is absolutely free from sinners and the very borderland of heaven. Yet the statistics are technically correct.

There is that despicable and numerous mob of "mission-workers," every member of which is converted many times a month, making a round trip of all the missions in the city, to begin all over again when the circuit is completed. Then there are the many, many "backsliders," who "fall" at the least approach of temptation, to return to their whining and self-accusation at the same old stand, as soon as their debauch is over. I heard a man say in his testimony that he had "fallen" fourteen times, and had "come home" again as many times in the same mission. Every one of these cases is recorded, in addition to the sincere conversions, and helps to swell the total.

This brings us to a delicate phase.

I have heard it said, time and time again, that a man's soul—be he tramp or millionaire—is priceless, and it is because I believe it to be true that I am willing to brave your criticism. We have no scruples in speaking our minds about politics, labour affairs, commercial situations, or anything else that is of moment to us, but we are afraid to speak and to see straightly the things which are veiled by the mantle of self-made righteousness. Yet they are the most important matters, because they concern men's souls, and criticism is allowable because the cap need be worn only by those whom it fits.

The public side of mission work can be seen by all; the nether side is seen only by few. I have

peeped behind the scenes and find that human nature is very much the same everywhere. When one has a good job he hates to lose it. Leaders of missions receive fair salaries and are expected to show results in return for them. Converts must be made, and that they are made can only be proved by the number of testimonies. This puts a premium on testimonies, and this is noticed by those contemptible rascals, the "mission sharks," a kind of men possessed of a certain glibness and familiarity with Bible texts. This narrows itself down to the deduction that they who speak well and often receive much encouragement, including bed-tickets, meal-tickets, and cast-off clothing, while the less gifted and less cheeky convert—although, perhaps, more sincere than the other—receive less. I am not speaking at random and am prepared to be challenged.

The fact of the matter is that the system is superannuated and needs revising. It has fallen into a rut and has become the refuge of a lot of incompetents, who, after failing at everything else, are put into this business, the most important in the world, by influential friends or tired relatives. The bright men among the evangelists cannot confine themselves to missions in the slums, but feel "calls" to speak to the masses *en masse,* and the slave of the slum has to be satisfied with the outpourings and converting experiments of mediocrities.

These things seem incongruous to my people. Uptown, from where the good come to visit the slums, are beautiful churches, beautiful singing, and beautiful sermons, preached by men trained for their calling—students, orators, and thinkers—bringing to their work brilliant intellects and other qualifications. They are well equipped to bring the Gospel nearer to their congregations. And yet their congregations are the good and righteous, understanding the Word, while the sinners are downtown.

A well-known educational authority told me that it requires more science and knowledge to teach a kindergarten properly than to be a college professor. If that is so, why does the kindergarten of salvation fare so poorly? The missions are mostly makeshift, dingy meeting-places with wretched song services, and the Word is twisted into the most grotesque interpretations by faddists in evangelical speaking, who find there their only tolerant territory. And they who are expected to be attracted by this are of warped, but not always of primitive minds. Yes, I know of the great power of the Word, but why make it so attractive to those who know it and so unattractive to those who do not know it, or have forgotten it? Medicine cannot be taken by some unless it comes in sugar-coated pills: of such are my people, and they are sick in mind and heart of their sin. You send

us well-trained men and women to educate our minds. Why do you not apply the same standard to those whom you send to save our souls?

A large percentage of the leaders of missions are men with records. Some, in their testimonies, tell of the time when they rolled around in the gutter in drunken stupor; others relate how criminal they have been in and out of prison. The note of shivering agony and misery is ever present, while the glad message of salvation is given with unconvincing lukewarmness. There is a place for these men—these personal-calamity howlers—in the work, but they should not be leaders. The lower classes have heard rumours about the universally awakened progress along intellectual lines, and they are craving for it. Their lives have made them exceedingly practical, and spectacular methods have no more than temporary effect on them. They do not want freak methods and "horrible examples." They want to find the true, direct way, and while looking for it anxiously, want it shown intelligently. There has been a lot of tomfoolery and very little common sense given to the slum people in every field of endeavour for years, but that day is past, and they rightly demand now to be considered human beings with powers of feeling and understanding.

At this writing I have before me an authorised interview, published in the *Evening World* of September 25, in which Commander F. St. George

de L. Booth-Tucker of the Salvation Army told of his intention to forestall John Alexander Dowie's invasion of the Bowery, and pledged himself to save the people of the Highway of the Foolish and Miserable in nine days. I quote from it to show the tenor of the whole.

Sensationalism will dominate it from start to finish, and the finish will be the most sensational of the whole nine days.

It will be a procession of the Army's hosts from one end of the Bowery to the other during the afternoon of October 4. At the head of this procession twelve of the strongest soldiers of the Army will bear upon their shoulders a coffin. In the coffin will be a living man. When the Bowery has been traversed from end to end the coffin will be carried into Miner's Bowery Theatre, and there all the ceremonies attending a regular funeral will be observed.

Then Commander Booth-Tucker will preach his most powerful sermon of the week, his subject being "Buried Alive."

Then there will be the "Jersey Lily." He is a man of great personality, who at present is in charge of our Labor Bureau, and his words cannot fail to carry great weight with those who hear him.

Others who will testify to the disadvantages of a life on the Bowery from every standpoint, are "Scottie," an old-time saloon-keeper; the "Tammany Tiger," one of Tammany Hall's old-time spellbinders; the "Harrisburg Tomato," one of the greatest speakers New York has ever heard; the "Happy Irishman," who can make more bulls and exemplify more common sense than any other man in America, and the "California Golden Minstrel."

This last is the very sweetest singer New Yorkers ever heard, and we are confident that his melody, backed by the eloquence and convincing arguments of our speakers, will win many souls to Christ and make Dowie's visit on the Bowery one without reason or necessity.

My personal opinion concerning the methods of the Salvation Army may not be of great importance, but I can recollect other promises and pledges of like nature, and still the Bowery is as it was, and the slums are weltering in their sin. I was born in the slums—Commander Booth-Tucker was not—and I know that only systematic efforts bear fruit, and not the cymbal and bass drum of an emotional wave. There is work to be done in the slums, but it must be quiet, hard work, without hurrahs. Speaking of work, I feel convinced that in that lies the result and non-result of many reformative and rescuing organisations.

God will abundantly bless any undertaking which has for its foundation good Christian sense, and He preaches with His word the gospel of honest toil. I still hold to it—because it has not yet been disproven, although I made this assertion a long time ago—that there is work for everybody who can work and wants it. If a man, through his helplessness, finds himself penniless, he needs, first of all, honest work and honest pay to rekindle his self-reliance. Were this recognised, the missions would be rescue missions indeed. But what is done? Nothing is done for him, until he lowers himself to degrading, and often imaginary, depths of sin, to be saved from them by perfunctory workers. After that he is kept balancing between actual want and modified need. If eventually work

is given to him, it is of the "odd-job" order, and mostly paid for by meals or bed-tickets. He becomes a dependent creature and recognises quickly that he is not trusted by his fellow-Christians. It is an old saying among the "has-beens" that Christians are exacting taskmasters and poor payers.

Would it not be better to draw distinctions? If a man comes to the mission for food or clothing, needy through lack of work, give him the chance to earn what he needs. If he comes because his burden of sin is heavy on him and throws himself at the bleeding feet of Christ, crying, "Save me, Master, I have sinned," be you the first to lift him from his knees and to lead him to the ever-ready fount. Let this distinction be observed and a lot of hypocrisy will remain unused. Do not try to purchase a man's soul with a free ticket.

The distinction can be made successfully. Great work is done by the Bowery Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. There are an employment bureau, dormitories, and a restaurant. If you need work, you can go to the employment bureau; if you are hungry or homeless, Mr. Honeyman, the secretary, will provide for you. He will help you not only for a day, but until you can shift for yourself, or else prove yourself unworthy of help. No condition of conversion is imposed. But you must work for your bed and your meal. Meetings

are held every night, and the unfortunate or sinful one who hears the testimonies given there will not hear them many times before a glowing desire will come to him to be also one of the bright-eyed, clean-cut men who were helped to help themselves out of temporary holes, and who can now tell of it in all manliness, without whining or crawling, giving God all the glory.

Then there is my old "hang-out," the dear old Bowery Mission, the stanch old Church of Sinners. Here they offer you the Word—nothing else—but very intelligently and cheerfully, amid suitable surroundings, with splendid music. (I am not a stickler for ritualism, but only for fitness.) Constantly it is proved there that true righteousness brings its own reward. When the invitation is given there, they come forward and find good, loving friends to pray with them, put their arms around them, and bid them good-night when they leave, some for their lodging-house cots, some for the long, nocturnal journeys in the streets. It is different when Mrs. Mary Bird is there. Long ago she was named the "Mother of the Bowery," and, as she says, "I can't let my sons be in want, when I have plenty." But—bless you!—she gives to all, Christian and sinner alike, and to be in want is the only plea necessary with her.

I know a man who was saved in the Bowery Mission, and who "carried the banner"—walked

the streets at night—without a murmur for ten days after his salvation.

"I wanted Christ, not a bed-ticket," was his answer when I asked him about it. Truly he was a Spartan Christian.

Brother John G. Hallimond, the Bowery Mission can't spare you, but it would be a good thing for the other rescue missions if you could show them how the Word can make converts, irrespective of bed-tickets.

Good, square, sincere men have been reclaimed in the Bowery Mission through the test of honest work at honest pay, and God does not want the man who will not work.

The wreckage of salvation is darkened by many dreary ruins. As told before, much money is always available for Christian work, but the right spirit seems scarce.

Long ago a home for ex-convicts was started by a man named Dunn. It flourished for a while, then died a lingering death. Now New York is the only one of the great cities that has not a refuge for men released from prison. A home for ex-convicts is maintained by the Volunteers, but it is "an unknown quantity," the public not being permitted to know anything about it. Inspection of it or information concerning it was flatly refused me at the Volunteer headquarters.

In East Twenty-sixth Street is a group of build-

ings owned by the Fruit and Flower Mission. Once there was life and work there for redeemed men, but the valuable property seems sleepy and drowsy now. This is not meant as a reflection on the hospital work conducted by the mission.

Several missions tried to furnish work for their converts by starting broom shops. However, although the men were paid only twenty-five and fifty cents a week, they always had a deficit at the end of the year and were finally discontinued as being financial failures. This was in spite of the fact that they were getting better prices for their wares, and had a better market—opened for them by sentiment—than outside manufacturers. There are wrecks all along the shore, giving plenty of opportunities to "calamity-howlers."

Perhaps you would also class me among the croakers. I hope you will not, because I should fervently resent it. I want to be perfectly fair, and am willing to admit much. Every mission does good and is an influence for good. Every agency that gives a bed or a meal to one of my needy fellows is welcomed by me, provided it uplifts instead of distorting manhood. What I am complaining about is that much of the money which is sent to the rescue of the slums is wasted, not so much by intent as by ignorance. If a man gives me a hundred dollars to help you and I buy you a five-dollar pair of shoes, I help you, but not

according to the degree of the giver's intention. There is a lot of discriminate and indiscriminate dispensing of charity by missionaries, and some of the discriminate is sinisterly tinged.

Remedies for these cancers on the long-suffering body of Charity should not be hard to find. Centralise material relief; scatter the Word. Draw distinctions between the two in every place where the work in done in His name. You, rich and free givers, give not only your money, but also your thought and coöperation. Never was the time more auspicious than now for work in this vineyard, for the soil is ready. Do not come to the tune of tam-tams and trumpets, but come to quietly follow His command, "Go ye and labour."

Yes, and a hundred times yes, I am biassed and bitter, because I know there are men and women who would "try God's way"—it has come to that—but they are frightened away by the hovering shams and cheats. I have asked men to go to missions, and they have answered: "No, we don't want to have anything to do with 'fakes.'"

Think of it! "Fake" coupled with work for God! You will throw up your hands in horror at this, but you have always been more ready to condemn than to help your fellow, the slave of the slum.

Even one, a unit, can contain a great dynamic force. Were I a missionary, I would prefer mak-

ing ONE Christian to making a thousand converts, and I feel sure I could convince my financial patrons that their money was not ill spent. That one Christian, by his personality and example, would be a living witness and the greatest means of bringing others to Him. Numbers do not count with the loving Shepherd who went out to the mountains wild and bare to gather home the one—just one—the hundredth of His sheep.

IV

THE LEVEL OF THE SODDEN

"AIN'T it fierce to have to hang out in a place like this?"

My companion expected no answer to his question. The answer was all about us.

We were in Nick's on Bayard Street. To classify the place, to give it its proper appellation, is no easy task. Those who know the least about it or its like would call it a "low drinking place," or "common resort." A dominie went so far as to describe it as "one of the present people's clubs, destined to remain in existence until proper clubs shall be established where the poor can partake of light beer and kindred refreshments amidst cheerful surroundings."

"Nick's Dead-House" and "The Morgue" were our names for the place—and we knew it pretty well.

Smut was everywhere. It was on the floor, the walls, the ceiling; in the clothes, faces, and speech of the men, and only the devil knows what sort of stuff was in our "tubs," parading as beer, befuddling, and even killing, men as fast as the other "rot-gut"—five-cent whisky.

We were there, not because we had any clubable desires, but because we had to be there. There were fires within us, and wherever the most for the least was given, there we—and all the brethren of the burning thirst—could be found.

Pasts are queer things. For some you never grow weary of delving into memory and, when recalled and before you in the mellowed haziness of time, you live them over again and again, and smile the happy smile of remembrance. You laugh at the silliness of your happiness and spend long moments in trying to recollect some little detail, unimportant, yet of consequence, it, too, having been part of that business. And there are the other pasts that you cannot forget—that will not be forgotten—that put you in a mood where the philanthropy of the whole world is outweighed by the "dead-house's" gift—the blessing of oblivion.

Again—it was unnecessary for me to answer my companion's question.

We were not old acquaintances. For the last two nights we had been neighbours in the lodging house, occupying adjoining bunks. The common motive made us meet in Nick's, and, as customary among the sodden, we sat together to travel jointly into forgetfulness.

Receiving our "tubs" from the greasy bartender, we chose a table near the door so that everybody entering could see us and could be seen by us.

"Tub houses" have their own, weird fascination, and, should any of the patrons get away from the environment for a time, they cannot bury all the remembrance of it, but will—for a day or a week—return to this most gruesome Bohemia. These prodigals always have money to show off and to treat their friends, and an army is always ready to receive them with open arms. That is why we sat near the door.

We drank our first "tub" in silence. Ordering another, our finances were examined. The prospect was horrible—only the price of one more.

The other, being less accustomed to the effects of the "tub," started on the foolish road with his second glass. His mood was retrospective, threatening the unloading of confidences.

"Seven o'clock, and only one more beer between now and bed-time," he growled. "It's fierce to think of it."

"What time do you go to bed?" I asked.

"Well, drunk or sober, I hate to crawl under the blankets before ten or eleven. It don't make much difference to-night, though. I'm spending my bed money now."

He laughed at his paradoxical fate.

We drank slowly and smoked, and then the other spoke again.

"I don't mind carrying the banner and walking the streets for a night, if it wasn't for the things a

fellow thinks about, tramping from one end of the town to the other."

I knew he was about to tell me a few chapters from his life, and, not wishing to encourage him too much—for we all have troubles of our own—I made no reply.

"Only to think that less than two years ago I didn't know there were such places and such stuff as this," he continued. "And now I'm kicking because I can't get enough of it. It's fierce!"

"Are you only two years on the bum?" I asked, simulating interest.

"That's all, and don't you think it's long enough to be carrying the banner, or sleeping in them ten-cent bunks, and getting your chuck either in a five-cent beanery or at some basement door? And nothing to drink only 'tubs'?"

"Well, if you feel that bad about it, why don't you quit being on the bum?"

"Yes, why don't I? Why don't you or any of us?" he sneered. "None of us knows what it is, but once you get down this far, something goes out o' you and you're stuck for good. And then they holler, 'It's drink, the demon of rum,' that's the cause of it."

"Well, if it ain't rum, what is the cause of it?"

The contents of his glass were decreased before he answered.

"It's women!" he cried. "They're the cause of

bringing most of us fellows down to this. I don't mean that we got to be wife-beaters or anything like that. Most of us been as straight as they make them. But, all of a sudden, it's either the wife, or some other woman, and you go out of your head, and then, and not before, it's drink and a wind-up in jail or on the bum."

I looked at the spectre, unkempt and bleary, and searched in vain for a remaining trace of a romantic tragedy.

"Do you mean to tell me that a woman started you on the road to perdition?"

"That's what she did."

Then I knew that he intended to tell me his story.

He half-carried the "tub" to his lips, but put it down again, and stared at some flies flirting with a pool of the stuff in the centre of the table.

"I was making good wages and thought I'd get married. One day, three years later, I got caught in the belt of my machine and this old arm o' mine got twisted out o' joint." He held up his palsied limb with a movement typical of mendicants. "Some o' them wanted me to sue the company; but the super came 'round to see me, and, when I got well again, he gave me a job as nightwatchman. There was less money in that than working at the bench, but it was easy, and I had mostly all day to myself."

"Didn't you sleep in the daytime?"

He smiled at my ignorance.

"I can see you never been a nightwatchman! A man who can't get enough naps during the night ain't got no right to be a watchman. Of course, once in a while, a man has to lie down in his bed with all his clothes off, but that is for health and not for rest, because he gets all the rest he needs at night."

I nodded comprehendingly.

"Well, everything was lovely till the wife began to kick about having less money to keep the house than when I was at the machine, and the first thing I knew we had a boarder, a fellow that was working over at the shop."

Before a new chapter was begun, we finished our beer and called to Nick for "two more."

"This is our last," he commented, when Nick placed the two "tubs" before us, "and I got such a thirst on me I could drink a keg dry. It's no use o' talking, it's fierce to come to this, and you'll say the same after you hear what happened. Here's happy days."

We took deep draughts before returning to his story.

"So that fellow was boarding with us for several months, and I was glad that the old woman stopped her kicking when——"

"I think you were foolish to give up all that," I

interrupted. "You're fit enough even to-day to be a nightwatchman."

His recollection was taking hold of him, and he drank again to see the past with better ease.

"That's true enough. I could do my work all right, even if I got a touch of rheumatism; but it's a funny game, this keeping boarders."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't know how smart you are," he remarked, somewhat disdainfully, "but I guess you'll understand this all right. One night I had a worse touch of the rheumatiz than ever before, and the super, happening to be still in the office, put a man in my place and let me go home."

The mask of indifference fell and the fiend was disclosed.

"And they didn't expect me at home!"

He almost emptied his glass.

"What did you——?"

"I had the rheumatiz, he didn't, and he got away before I could choke him like a rat. I wanted to kill him and her, but she, too, got away on me before I—but wait."

The last drops of the beer were fairly sucked from the bottom of the "tub."

"Then everything went to the dogs. I didn't care what happened, and——"

"Ever seen either of them again?"

"No, and her I don't want to see again—what's

the use?" he spoke growlingly. "And him—him?—I been following that hound all these years. Wherever I heard he was I went. I tramped and begged from town to town, and sometimes was so close to him that I only missed him by a few hours. And now I been hanging 'round here, because I know he's here, and, sooner or later, I'll meet him, and then—then——"

He paused so long that I felt constrained to ask, "What would you do to him?"

"What would I do to him?" he howled. "What would I do to him? Look at me! I'm dirty and filthy, a bum and a tramp, and that sneaking cur helped to make me that! What would I do to him? I ain't as strong as I used to be, but if that skunk was to come here this minute, I'd kill him! I'd tear him! I'd—I'd—I'd kill him! and, after, they can hang me or do what they like with me."

His manner of expression and intonation, not forgetting the scenic environment, had put me in melodramatic *rapport,* and, as the door opened to admit another brother of the burning thirst, I hoped he would prove to be the villain come to receive his just deserts.

The newcomer was of shifty look. His roving eyes examined every face in the room as he slouchingly passed our table on his way to the bar. He drank his beer hanging to the railing of the counter, and the glances he shot across to our table and to

the ex-nightwatchman primed me for further developments.

My companion had fallen to brooding. I ascribed his sullen humour to the bitterness of his awakened past, but his next speech proved me wrong and showed that the awkwardness of the present was not to be outweighed.

"Say, you're a good fellow. You know Nick better'n I do. Try and 'hang him up' for two 'tubs' until to-morrow, will you? I'm sure of fifty cents for putting in a ton o' coal to-morrow, and I'll pay him. Go ahead, will you?"

My answer came without hesitancy.

"I will not. You know Nick wouldn't trust his own father for a beer, and, besides, I had all I want."

"Oh, you had all you want, did you?" he shouted. "Well, then I'm damned if I don't try him myself, and just for one, for myself."

Unsteadily he rose from his chair and slunk to the bar.

The newcomer had watched the ex-nightwatchman with cat-like attention. Now, as he saw my companion approach the bar, against which he was still leaning, he made as if to move away. But the temporary impulse was checked and drunken bravado made him hold his post. And so he heard the other's whining appeal for "just one, Nick, just one—until to-morrow."

"Sure, I trust," said Nick, who had a reputation as a humorist, and pointed at the sign behind him, which bore this facetious legend:

"WE TRUST—TO-MORROW."

My companion was obstinate and hated to take the refusal. Prompted by the unholy craving of his poisoned stomach, he had rehearsed this scene time and again, and could plead, beg, and cajole with a great output of emotion; but—to-night at least—it was in vain, and, like a whipped mongrel, he returned to the table.

"What do you think o' that?" he challenged me, forgetting our recent difference. "I ain't even good for a 'tub' o' this dirty, rotten stuff no more! And I must have another drink, pal, I must. It's all burning inside of me. Don't you know of any way? I ain't got nothing; I couldn't even get a nickel for all the rags on my back. And I'd sell my soul for a drink just now, honest, I would. I'd do anything on the calendar for a——"

"What's the matter?"

The newcomer had made his way to our table.

"What d'you kicking about?" he asked the ex-nightwatchman. "If you want a beer, why don't you go and get it?"

"I ain't got the price," answered the other despondently.

"So you ain't got the price, eh?"

The newcomer was feeling his way and becoming more assured with every turn.

"No, I ain't got the price," reiterated my companion, "and I don't think you got it either."

"What, I ain't got it?" the newcomer laughed cynically and pulled his hand, filled with small coin, from his pocket. "D'you see this? D'you think there's the price of a couple o' beers in this handful?"

The eyes of the ex-nightwatchman shone with the fire of rapacity.

"Would you?—do you——" he stammered.

"Sure, I will," affirmed the newcomer; "here's a nickel; go and get yourself a 'tub.'"

Like a conquering hero, my companion went to the bar and ordered his drink with elaborate haughtiness. I took this opportunity to ask the newcomer my question. Yes, he was the man.

The ex-watchman returned with his foaming "tub" and, hoping for more to follow, wanted to seat himself beside his new friend. But I felt an approaching crisis, and, wishing to postpone it, if not able to prevent it, I moved my chair between the two men.

The new friend was a master of refined torment. Instead of replacing the money taken from his pocket, he kept it tantalisingly displayed in his dirty palm. He jingled the handful of coin with a clink-

ing, rasping refrain. Even while he spoke, the dimes and nickels were dancing, making weird accompaniment to his speech and fascinating the gloating fool on the other side of the table.

They gave the customary toast, and then the newcomer leaned over the table, after slyly winking at me.

"Don't you know me no more?" he asked the ex-watchman.

A pair of bleary eyes peeped at the questioner from an approaching ecstasy of stupefaction.

The answer was the usual bit of tub-house politeness.

"There's something familiar about you, but I can't place you."

"I must have changed more than I thought I had," laughed the capitalist. "Anyway, let's have another drink."

The ex-watchman gulped the last of his beer and listened to the jingling of the dancing coin till the replenished glasses were put on the table. To Nick the stranger made the welcome announcement that he intended to stay there until the last cent was spent. My companion, feeling himself included in this, trembled with ill-suppressed pleasure.

"So you don't remember me?" asked the newcomer again.

"No," answered the other, fast giving in to the influence of the stuff. "Where was it we met?"

The stranger stretched across the table, bringing his face within a few inches of the other's.

"Now, look at me close."

The sodden thing struggled to come to the border of intelligence. The ex-watchman stared and scowled into every line and crevice of the face before him, and, at last, he knew.

It was my cue for action. I threw myself on the outraged man, and, twining my arms around him, braced myself to restrain him. Had I not been there, I reasoned, the stranger's life would have been in direst jeopardy. But, strangely, my muscles were not taxed to the utmost. True, a tremor ran through the body held by me, but there was no tugging to become free, to rush at the other's throat and tear it from ear to ear. Instead, I felt a relaxing of balance, then I felt a dead-weight hanging to me. I released the bloodthirsty revenger. He fell back into his chair. His gaze just met the coins, still jingling in the stranger's palm. Yet there is much trickery in browsing, and, as a matter of safety, I kept my hands on his arms for a case of emergency.

The ex-watchman was the first to speak.

"I ought to kill you," he hissed to him who had betrayed his hospitality.

And then I let my hands fall from his arms, for a safeguard was necessary no longer.

"What, kill me for a woman?" the newcomer

laughed right merrily. "Don't talk like a fool. Drink up and have another one."

"I ought to kill you—I ought to kill you—I ought——" murmured the ex-husband, and passed his glass to the waiting Nick to have it refilled at the expense of the ex-boarder.

V.

THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE OF THE SLUMS

THE needs of the slums, and of those who live in them, are so many that only the most crying can hope to find immediate and substantial relief. The need of food, clothes, and money is always present in the slums, and always so extremely visible that the attention of philanthropists is easily attracted by it. And so the many millions which are yearly given to the relief of the needy go chiefly for the mitigation—not the abolition—of the most pressing cases.

Even superficial investigation will make one dissatisfied with the equivalent result for the sums expended; but it would be unjust to ascribe this to sinister causes. Much money is subscribed unconditionally, without requiring an accounting, and, not considering the exceptional cases of dishonesty on the part of unimportant newly recruited workers, every dollar contributed is honestly expended. However, the pity is that honesty does not always spell competence, ability, and intelligence, and, through the absence of these essential traits, much of the money intrusted to sincere and enthusiastic

workers is frittered away and wasted without bringing any return.

About four years ago $15,000 was subscribed to establish a reading-room and restaurant in the very heart of the slum district in New York. The lease of the place had been presented by the owner of the building and did not figure in the expenditures. The undertaking was the inspiration of a splendid old Christian, whose staunch and simple faith shone forth in every word uttered by him on evangelistic platforms, where he was—and still is—a most convincing and persuasive speaker.

The father of the idea, he was put in charge of the work, and everything seemed promising. Suddenly the work stopped and a cry for assistance was raised. At the ensuing meeting it was found that over $3000—and less than that amount was required to complete the original idea—had been expended wastefully and without vouchers. With tears in his honest eyes, the old enthusiast pleaded for himself and against the insinuation of dishonesty, which did not threaten him at all. But it was found that all plumbers, carpenters, and other tradesmen are not thorough Christians, and, also, it was demonstrated that strong faith does not always bring great physical strength—I myself had seen three able-bodied men, recent converts from an interested mission, carry, with a close resemblance to hard work, a board which would have

been an easy burden for one frail man. Of course, the deficit was made up, and my good old friend superintended the job to the end.

Perhaps the following will further illustrate why we have such workers and such results:

A woman, true, strong, and intelligent, had long been in charge of the mission station nearest to my field of individual activity. Her great heart had pulsed with the misery about her and her wise head had done wonders in alleviating it. She had worked without ceasing, and the logical reward, for such toil—long illness—did not pass her by. As her successor, a sweet young woman, the distant relative of a clergyman, came to us from the meadows of her country home. From the meadows to the slums is quite a jump, which, her sponsors claimed, would be minimised by her abundant faith.

Having no other fad or hobby, I spend my leisure hours with those who were once my neighbours and are still my dear friends and brothers. So I was honoured by a request from the newcomer to cooperate with her. To coöperate with anyone who wants to feed, clothe, house, or enlighten my very own people comes within my purpose. Unfortunately, coöperation in this instance was out of the question. We differed in opinion and method. As I know and see it, theories formulated in the quiet of the homestead, puritanical doctrines and didactic dogmas suited to New England temperaments,

cannot be forced upon the complex population of the slums with a moment's effort. And soon the new missionary could walk a whole block without having one of the many children in the street come running up to her with smiling greeting. And that is not as it should be.

There were other reasons, and ere long a change was requested. I had little enough to do with the case, yet one in authority came to me to probe my "unfriendliness." As it happens that I care more for the fate of the hungry soul of one slum child, beating seemingly in vain against the incarcerating walls of ignorance, indifference, and heartlessness, than for the convenience of all sweet women whose frenzied ardour makes their life purposes the very essence of selfishness, I had no difficulty in stating my view of the case. There was ample corroboration, and the indictment could not be evaded.

"But," said he in authority, summing up, "you can't deny she means well."

Not a word did I have to say against that, for I knew it to be true. But it still remains unproven that the attributes of "meaning well," or of being a Christian, will make up for inefficiency and will make good teachers, workers, or missionaries. And, according to my humble logic, where most urgent help is needed, the helpers cannot be too highly gifted, trained, or inspired.

Comparison between the methods of settlements

and rescue missions will show that, though the former are constantly progressing and untiringly introducing new features in their different departments, the latter are conducted in almost the same way as when they were first started. Settlements make no pretence of catering to the sentimental side of the slums. They are eminently practical, and I know young men and women—bright, decent, and well-behaved—who went to the settlement kindergarten as tots, and who owe their intelligent respectability to their still maintained connection with their alma mater. No improved substitute could be found for these settlements, for the very good reason that they are constantly improving themselves. But, I must repeat, while a sort of sterilised kindness is vouchsafed to every child and youth under the jurisdiction of the settlement faculty, the strong sentimental tendency of the slum character is severely left alone, and, perhaps, intentionally left alone. And—if you will remember that I do not speak from your side of the border—it seems a pity to me that always the needs and not always the wants and natural inclinations of the lesser people, among which their leaning toward the sentimental is almost the strongest, are considered.

Let me quote to you the exact words of an old cynic who is known to every worker in the New York slums and who has frequently been a recipient of their charity.

"I'll tell you the whole thing in a nutshell," he replied, when I asked him why his lot, in spite of the many efforts to "reform" him, was not more satisfactory. "These people that come down here to help us get so many cases like mine that they haven't got time for anything else but to judge by the facts. There hasn't been a day in the last fifteen years when a 'five-spot' wouldn't have been a good-sized fortune to me. All this the 'good' people know, and, naturally, they think where I need the most and immediate help is in my stomach. Now, whilst I'm never above accepting a good, square meal that I don't have to pay for, there are times when I wish they would think me capable of doing something else besides eating. But the trouble is that they've got to judge by facts, and what a man's past history is, or what his 'likings' might be, can't be considered when there's the fact right before you that he's in need. And as they won't feed us all the time we always drop back into need, while if they would try to rouse us sometimes with the right kind of stuff we might—although I ain't saying we would—get, maybe, different and better thoughts than we now have."

This statement, which I would not want to have considered entirely justified, indicates that quite a number of the seedy ones crave other things as much as material help. I believe I am not absolutely isolated in my opinion that the right sort of

amusement is an important factor in any movement aiming at mental and moral improvement.

The people of the slums are direct in deed and word, likes and dislikes, and expect direct appeal in their entertainment. Problem plays and psychological studies in dramatic form do not "go" with audiences from the tenements. Their dramas must be strong and decisive in speech and action. The equivocation of epigrammatic dialogue would be classed as "hot-air talk." Rigidly defined canons must be observed by him who would be their playwright. The "speeches" of the leading actors must be short, full of accentuated sentiment, and accompanied by either most forceful gesture or suitable action. The hero who would attempt to deliver a "speech"—no matter how well done rhetorically—in quiet pose and without his hands fighting the air would receive some exceedingly pointed prompting from gallery and orchestra on how his part should be played according to all time-honoured traditions. Great scenic effects are not expected by the first-nighters of this sort of drama. At the Third Avenue Family Theatre scenic effects are more suggested than depicted, and yet the audience at this really typical "home of the melodrama" will never criticise the stage-setting, although only too ready to comment on the action and language of the scene.

I have neither the desire nor the qualification to

fix the melodrama's place in dramatic art, but I know that the young and old of the tenements take it as their favourite form of amusement. The most rip-roaring farces or comedies, even though presented by an "all-star cast of comedians," have not the drawing power of the most mediocre and trashy melodramas.

Mental activity in the slums is not developed very much beyond fixing itself on the happenings of the immediate time and place. The conversation of social intercourse among the women is confined to the scandal of the neighbourhood; among the men, to district politics or the latest crime. Their sentimentality, saved from becoming callous by the lack of opportunity of application, is always ready to explode, but the appeal must come from without, because it cannot come from within. A mood, an atmosphere, has to be created, and in this the melodrama is the most potent creator. However, among the older people and those who are surfeited with an indulgence in melodramatic pleasures, the power of staged villainy and virtue is superseded by that poor substitute for "folk-song," the popular song.

Without harmony—save the mark!—no ceremonial occasion is possible in the social life of the slums. Race or religion has little to do with this custom. The general supposition that only the Irish of the Catholic denomination are given to much singing at their festal events is not true. Irish, Ger-

man, Italian, and even Hebrew christenings are celebrated with much joyful singing, and the funerals of the same races are also conducted to the airs of more sombre music.

I have often wondered why, in the work of reclaiming the human driftwood, this sentimentality has not been more strongly appealed to.

I am of the opinion that one who can voluntarily exchange a life of usefulness and respectability for an existence as crook or outcast is not of sound mind. Most people of weak mind are exceedingly sentimental. These men and women, who turn night into day for their own purposes, make the back rooms of dives—usually the legislative annexes of some statesman-patriot—their favourite haunts. In most of these rooms a piano is manipulated by some fallen troubadour. Everyone of the creatures is ready to tell the story of the past, and everyone will lie about it; but there are moments when through their layer of accumulated moral and physical filth a peep at their selves is possible.

Even piano players have "feelings," and frequently the master of the keys, in return for a little refreshment, will "oblige on request." Yes, I have sat there and have seen the masks of hardness and sinfulness falling, while behind the curtain of tears I saw but a weak, foolish human being.

The other night the song played "on request" was one in which a mother is praying in her coun-

try home for the straying one. While that thought was the *leitmotif* of the lyric, the verse ran to birds, flowers, brooks, and hillsides. Especially in the chorus the hillside was used for rhyming with "bride," "light," and "pride," and the one who had made the request seemed to be infatuated with the hillside refrain and hummed it for hours. Alas, contrary to expectations, the poor creature's knowledge of hillside, birds, and flowers was restricted to sand dunes at Coney Island, sparrows in Mulberry Bend Park, and the "fresh-cut" pinks of the peddlers on the Bowery. But the commonplace platitudes of the song seemed to her the acme of all that was sweet, pure, and wholesome.

These songs about home and mother never fail to bring the tears to the eyes of some whom you would scarcely think capable of the gift of weeping. During these periods of accentuated emotion their minds and hearts are plastic to the slightest suggestion for good. And this channel to get at the hearts of the lost and fallen should be more used than it is. That the workers of rescue missions are aware of this responsive chord to certain appeal is shown by the continued usage of that old stand-by, "Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?"

A penny represents a great deal to a child of the slums. For it "sticky apples," "all-day" candy, "lossengers," and other sweet "dainties" may be

purchased. And pennies are dreadfully scarce in the slums. Not long ago, on my way to my down-town headquarters, I was squeezing myself through the hordes of children on the sidewalk, when I beheld an "extraordinary bargain" in the window of a shop which did threefold duty as stationery, tobacco, and candy store. A pile of multi-coloured cards had been spoiled by fire and water and were "almost given away." A few minutes later I had twenty-five of those cards and twenty-five newly coined pennies. I have a number of acquaintances among "the kiddies," and ere long the usual crowd got around me. Without comment I gave each one of my friends his or her choice: brand-new penny or damaged holiday card. After offering my tempting wares to twenty-five children I found that I had twenty-three pennies and only two cards left.

Yes, I know, the ape will always reach for the brightest object, and the cannibal is jollied into a preparatory state of civilisation by gay beads and buttons. But let me ask you in what state do we find the children of the slums?

A legacy of ugliness seemed to have been unburdened on one little girl who stood in the circle around me that day. Sins of fathers and mothers could easily be traced in the repulsive little phiz. Yet when she turned from the pennies to the damaged works of art in my other hand and chose a pink

moonrise, trimmed with blue snow, she looked very much like a mere child—a child whom anybody could have loved.

Only a few days ago a man who always remembers his friends when he is in need sent for me. I found him in a regulation "room" of a lodging house—a box-stall, six feet by four. He had lived there for months, it was his "home," and while he told me the usual tale I noticed his efforts to make the bare hole more homelike. Illustrations from various papers and periodicals were stuck to the wall, and here and there groups of really good smaller pictures enlivened the monotony. This, in itself, was encouraging, but particularly gratifying was the character of the pictures. Instead of pictures of prize-fights and other supposedly popular events, there were the Return of the Prodigal, the Sailor's Farewell, and kindred subjects.

"Ah," said the owner of this picture gallery, when asked by me to state his views on slum conditions, "don't you know what Jacob A. Riis says in one of his books? He says: 'That what the poor need most they hate the most.' But not many of them that come down here to make us good believe it. They have their own pet ideas, and we're only good for experiments. While we're alive some o' them try to make us good by eating certain kinds of food, or taking some kind o' pills, or believing in one kind of religion or another, or they try to

work some cure on us that's been thought out by some professor in college. And when we're dead they throw us on a table and let a lot o' students practise on us. Dead or alive, they think we're things to practise on, and not men, each one of us with a different disposition, temper, or curse. They prescribe for us, and we've got to take it. Them pictures on the wall? Say, ain't I low enough without you thinking I ain't got use for nothing only beef stew and mixed ale?"

"But there is the free picture gallery, the Museum of Art, and——"

"Oh, cut that out; cut that out!" he interrupted, with a mingling of contempt and disgust. "Whatever they give free in the way of art and such is always so far from the slums that a fellow gets broke paying carfare to get to it. Then, sure, they're free, but you just put on my rags and see how free-and-easy your admission to one o' them museums would be! It's like trying to get into one o' them swell churches with 'All Are Welcome' on the outside of it. And, besides, what do I know about art? I could stand in front o' one of them masterpieces for a whole day without tumbling whether it was a chromo or painted with real oil That ain't what I want. I just like to have something—something—ah, you know—something that'll take the rough edge off of things. There's times when I go to bed as soon as I can, because

there's no other place to go to when a fellow don't want to go to the mixed-ale camp.

"No, take it from me, being hungry ain't the worst part of this game."

There is no doubt about it, most of these men deserve their fate. If they do, why do you not leave them to their fate? Have you a right to help their bodies at the expense of their hearts and minds? If there is anything in that highfalutin balderdash about a universal brotherhood and the one great bond uniting all races and classes, why don't some of you, who have this sounding twaddle at the tips of your tongues, jump right into the midst of life as it is, and, instead of giving advice which you would never follow, step up to the nearest unfortunate representative of that great "brotherhood"—Heaven knows they're not hard to meet—and if you cannot give him or make him work, make him, at least, laugh or cry, and let him know that you recognise the fact that he has "feelings" as well as you. Many a man who cannot have his meals brought to him will take the trouble of going after them.

But no; they of the slums are treated like beings of another world. Whatever is found to be of no use "uptown" is sent "downtown" to be of use there. Cast-off clothing, scraps of food, discarded articles of all sort are sent daily, and are gratefully received. Perhaps it is a social tenet that they who

are not able to earn the necessaries of life must be satisfied with whatever is given to them in charity. But—and there are many in the slums who agree with me—if you want to lift the objects of charity from the state in which charity is their sole dependence, you cannot send only the human cast-offs of "uptown" to perform this task for the human cast-offs of "downtown." The most brilliant, the most educated, the most Christian are none too good for this duty of humanity.

VI

THE FEELINGS OF THE CITY FATHER

IN the great city are many, who, leading thoroughly respectable, quiet lives throughout the week, feel themselves inclined to be either Bohemian or, even, really "devilish" on Saturday, which is the pay-day of most of them. The great majority of these persons are of the tribe of "furnished roomers."

Harry Sloan and Mary, his wife, belonged to this class. Married almost a year, they had not yet reached that state of affluence of being able to "keep house," and were still waiting in a third-rate furnished-room house for things to improve. In the meantime they did not droop or worry, but went to their respective employments without grumbling, knowing that Saturday would bring its usual "good time."

They were of sociable disposition and not at all selfish. Noticing that their neighbour, the occupant of the little hallroom on the top floor, dwelt in pronounced solitude, perhaps enforced by a justified despondency, Sloan and his wife determined to be her Samaritans. Social barriers in furnished-room houses are easily surmountable,

and Mary Sloan had no great difficulty in making her proposition to their quiet neighbour.

On the following Saturday Harry Sloan, his wife, and Pauline Randall invaded the slums and dives, the haunts of the most miserable and degraded, for their "good time."

It so happened that, after feasting their eyes and ears—not forgetting their noses—on the various attractions of the slum district, the party adjourned to one of the most famous dives for their farewell cup. It seemed to be the unwritten law that all visitors to the locality had to stop at O'Dowd's to be at least able to claim a familiarity with this notorious "joint." And this "joint"—though never called that by its owner—was the business place and headquarters of the Hon. James O'Dowd, alderman.

Almost needless to say, O'Dowd was the leader of the ward. Leaders of men must be strong in personal influence. That is where O'Dowd was voted "immense." The old ward had sometimes shown signs of rebellion. With Jim's grasp on the reins it became a bulwark of the party. He kept that great mass of free, thinking Americans staunch to their allegiance. Before election, if at no other time, the voters of the district knew that something was coming to them—and how much. With the characteristic frankness of great men, Jim gave out the tip accurately, and, recognising their sov-

ereignty, declared "they didn't have to take it if they didn't want to."

Naturally, the ward expressed its appreciation of O'Dowd's leadership by a liberal patronage of his "joint." Naturally, also, O'Dowd grew fat on this appreciation. Being of short stature, his increasing breadth and thickness made him look still shorter. Between rolls of fat above, rolls of fat below, his eyes looked like the peas in a shell-game, and were as elusive. Withal he was the personification of true democracy, and proved it by the simple scene-setting of his back room, without which these legislative annexes do not seem to thrive.

A shaky piano, decorated with the sticky imprints of many glasses, showed that sweet music was discoursed here in the evening after the engrossing labours of the day. That every available corner of the room was crowded with tables and chairs was sufficient demonstration that many were in the habit of coming here. Further to manifest the patriotic spirit dwelling within this saw-dusted hall, two pictures—both intensely American, a scene at a poker-table, and Washington at Valley Forge —were hung on the grimy wall.

Let no one believe that the patrons of this rendezvous of patriots were of the common kind. Even royalties were not above spending their leisure moments in these congenial surroundings.

Nightly, unless detained by *incognito* sojourn elsewhere, such monarchs as "Erie" Mike, the king of confidence men; Barney Dwyer, king of "sawdust" men; "Guffy" Leary, the prince of "porch climbers," and others of the blood and kidney were there to receive the homage of their admirers.

And into this place came Harry Sloan, his wife, and Pauline Randall on this Saturday night to close their "good time" fittingly.

Proud of his intimacy with the "joint" and its habitués, Sloan developed himself into a veritable rogues' gallery of shady information for the benefit of Pauline Randall.

"And that's old Jim O'Dowd," Sloan remarked when that worthy, in democratic shirt-sleeves, came from the front barroom to join his friend Barney Dwyer, the aforenamed "sawdust king," at a little table in one of the corners of the room.

O'Dowd's rise to eminence being worthy of a lengthier story, Sloan ordered some additional refreshments as fitting accompaniment for his biographical sketch.

If Pauline Randall heard the story of the patriot, she did not show a very deep interest in it, seeming to listen rather with polite indifference. She was spared the final *dénouement* of the detailed account by an annoying incident.

A dispute arose between Sloan and the waiter who had brought the drinks.

Careful of the fair repute of his place, Jim O'Dowd, who had noticed the disturbance, excused himself to the "saw-dust" king and waddled to the table of Sloan and his party to restore order. Intending to apply the usual formula—"You got to keep quiet or get out"—to the offenders, his intention was changed by the peculiar timbre of a Voice, which rose distinctly from the babble.

"How d'you do?" was his salutation, which, in the stress of the moment, was not noticed.

"What's the matter?" he inquired next.

Sloan began: "Why, this waiter has——"

O'Dowd was not even aware of Sloan's existence. His glance rested so pointedly on Pauline Randall that, to bridge the embarrassment, she felt herself compelled to give the required explanation. The waiter, in returning the change of a bill handed to him in payment of the drinks, had attempted to cheat Sloan by the old trick of "palming" several coins.

Ears wide open, O'Dowd had not heard one word of the explanation. But he had listened, greedily listened, to the sound of that voice. He stood staring at Pauline Randall until the grievance had to be retold. Then he turned to the waiter.

"Make good!"

"What?"

If the sky had fallen on him, the waiter could

not have been more dumbfounded. It was understood that a "beer-slinger" not proficient in the legerdemain of vanishing coins was not considered a useful employee in the dives of statesmen. And here——

The "beer-slinger" gathered his wits and understood: it was a new bluff of the boss.

"Say, Jim, this guy didn't give me nothing of the kind. I ain't going to make good nothing, and——"

The fist of the city father landed on the jaw of his waiter and dropped him in a heap on the floor. The Voice had had its first offering.

"Get up on your feet and fetch us some drinks," ordered O'Dowd, pulling a chair to the table. "What'll you people have?"

That O'Dowd was a liberal spender was a long-established fact. In this instance it was not his instinct of hospitality or liberality which prompted him to "treat." He wanted to have an opportunity of listening to the Voice.

And there was reason in this infatuation.

He felt himself handicapped in his political advancement by his lack of polite refinement. Corroboration of this opinion had come to him by someone "way up" in the councils of the party. Jim was all a knave, and nothing of a fool, and a calculating hunger for gentility was carefully nursed by him. Every opportunity, promising to

bring culture a little nearer, was more than welcomed by him.

This, surely, was an excellent chance to spend some minutes within the sound of a voice, which, besides its resonance, had the modulation typical of refinement. That the voice which had attracted him had an undertone of peculiarly hard and harsh pitch, was beyond the ear of O'Dowd. He was a connoisseur in whisky, vice, and corruption, but not in the comparative quality of voices, and this Voice was fairly singing to him. Also—let us have the truth—that love which we so wantonly call "love at first sight" had suddenly come into the heart of the Hon. James O'Dowd, alderman.

So, there he sat, drinking in the tone of the Voice and enjoying the novel experience of having someone of refinement talk to him, not patronisingly, but on the basis of social equality. He was not shareless in the conversation, but, with customary directness, pried into her personal affairs. And she, while Sloan and his wife sat wonderingly, told to this thing all about herself.

She spoke hurriedly, hastily, yet without reserve. It perhaps contradicted her refinement and tact, but, it is proverbial, troubles and trials will make one exceedingly loquacious. Within a few minutes after their first meeting Jim O'Dowd knew that Pauline Randall had come to the city from the country school, which she had superintended,

with very little of negotiable property, but with many hopes and ambitions. The funds were quickly expended, and the hopes and ambitions did not last much longer. Now she had come to the end of her rope, did not know what was to become of her, and—she ended—"did not care."

An instinctive feeling told Jim O'Dowd that here was the chance of his life—if he could only grasp it.

Here was a real lady, who cared not what happened to her. To become the wife of the Hon. James O'Dowd was surely not the worst she could do. Now she was a nobody, even if a lady; then she would be somebody, would be right in line, and, "may be, there weren't many willing to change their name to his."

And, above all——

"There's never been a woman that stirred my feelings as much as Pauline, the first time I seen her," so it was later described.

Sloan and his wife had never been out so late before and felt a trifle disgruntled at their neglect, but Jim paid slight attention to them, confining himself to interpreting his feelings as well as he could under the circumstances. And even so, his purpose was understood by Pauline Randall.

That night, in her hallroom, Pauline Randall reviewed the occurrence and its probable consequences. Escaping from the narrow and humble

precincts of her home, she had come to the city hoping to reach the affluence which has come to so many invaders from rural communities. Judging her abilities by the standards of the village, where they had shone brilliantly, she found them to be but average when put to the severe tests of the metropolis. Although her small capital was hoarded with miserly care, it could not last forever, and Pauline could definitely foretell the day on which she would be absolutely penniless and helpless. The only saving grace about her isolated position was that it freed her from any controlling responsibility to others. She was responsible to herself alone.

She was not old. The twenty-three years of her life had not brought her many pleasures. And what is the propelling motive which brings the many to the great city? Is it only their desire to offer their gifts and talents unselfishly to the commonwealth for its greater glory? Does there not also lurk the partly suppressed, and yet potent, hunger for luxuries, shining more radiantly when read about where homeliness and simplicity abound?

Present circumstances forced Pauline Randall to pay the closest attention to the most material side of life, and when one has to train the appetite according to one's purse, the choice of continued plenty is hard to reject.

Two days later Pauline Randall and the Hon. James O'Dowd went to the theatre. It was but the beginning of a round of gaieties.

To keep himself in the background had never been one of O'Dowd's failings. Now he had so much more reason for display and make a bid for the limelight. Money was flung right and left. Only the most conspicuous box would do at the theatre.

"Don't care how I spend my money! There's lots more where this came from," said O'Dowd in all truthfulness.

At first Pauline liked the prominence given to them by the box seats. Before long she began to hate it. To see this peculiar pair in their box attracted the eyes of even the most indifferent in the audiences. The glances of the men did not prove so very annoying—Pauline had a fair estimate of her attractiveness—but the eyes of the women were troublesome, the dollar sign was at the end of their questions.

She made no objection to an early wedding. Nasty medicine is most easily taken quickly. Two months after her visit to Jim's dive Pauline Randall became his wife.

Preceding the wedding-day, O'Dowd took it upon himself to provide a home. A flat, containing all modern improvements and a flamboyant entrance of much iron-work, marble, and plush was

chosen for the connubial nest. An East Side furniture house received *carte blanche,* and an East Side furniture house with *carte blanche* can produce some striking effects. Some of his more favoured friends were permitted to view the result, and they admitted with conviction that it beat anything they had ever seen. The multitude of colours and their combinations were declared particularly "paralysing."

"I guess she won't have no kick coming on that? Looks rich, don't it?" commented O'Dowd without contradiction.

The celebration of the wedding was in keeping with the rest. The dance hall which had been rented for the occasion was crowded to suffocation. It was almost an event of national importance because of the many office-holders and statesmen present. There was dancing, eating, and drinking, and so much of the last that several patriots began to tell tales out of school. However, this was quickly stopped by some cooler head, and the night closed fitly with a grand chorus of,

"My country, 'tis of thee."

The wedding and the feast were prominently chronicled in the daily press, and the matrimonial venture of the O'Dowds seemed to have been launched under the most favourable auspices. Both had reached an end desired: he had a home, a handsome wife, and a mentor in etiquette and culture;

she was assured of as many meals a day as she wanted, had bodily comfort, and—a loving husband.

O'Dowd loved his wife intensely. But O'Dowd was a brute and loved according to his species. His love was heavily streaked with the sense of possession, of proprietorship. Instead of sentiment, he was overflowing with emotion. Soon, very soon, Pauline found her citadel of satisfaction impaired by the constant bombardment of his noisy affection.

A few months after the wedding she found herself fighting fiercely against many fits of brooding, which would and would return.

"I have no right to be dissatisfied," she told herself time and time again. "He has done everything possible for me."

It was true. According to his lights he had done everything possible. All the shrill gayness around her, the gaudy rugs and portieres, the gilt furniture, proclaimed it. His devotion was shown by the many hours he spent at home, neglecting the business at the dive, by the many presents he showered on her, and by his constant willingness to get more.

"There's nothing you can't have, Pauline," was his continual assurance. "I've got a healthy bundle o' money; but if it costs more than I got, I'll get it for you, anyway, even if I got to steal it."

The moods of brooding were irrepressible. At

times she would sit murmuring, "Pauline O'Dowd, Pauline O'Dowd," and shiver at the faulty euphony. His kisses became unbearable. If not successful in evading his embraces, she would run to the door he had slammed behind him and beat it with her fists, until weeping made her cease.

Coarse and thick-skinned as Jim was, he noticed the growing change in her, and, ascribing it to headaches or neuralgia, thought an increased spending of money the best remedy. But when no improvement followed, he took a more serious view of the matter and called in a physician.

Pauline gave little heed to her husband's solicitude. She sat and moped, and would not consent to see the eminent physicians "hired" by O'Dowd.

"There isn't anything the matter with me," she resented peevishly. "I just want to be alone and rest."

Her indifference, apathy, carelessness—what matters the definition—grew daily. The biograph of her mind's eye, continually spinning before her vision, unrolled the film of her future and made her loathe herself for having justified it. How could she think of living a future, peopled with characters of her husband's type! At such cost, affluence, security from want, was nauseating.

There were paths away from it; but they all led to destruction, moral or physical. Eventually

Pauline reduced her meditations to a weighing of the different ways.

Jim O'Dowd grew hopeful as, on a certain morning, Pauline seemed to have shaken off her melancholy lethargy and greeted him pleasantly at breakfast.

"Good girl," he cried heartily, "that's the way to do it. Never give in. Try and be yourself again."

"So I have determined," she answered, and Jim, only grasping the words, was fully content.

"You wait till I get home, and, maybe, I won't bring you something in the diamond line to celebrate this day when you got feeling like yourself again," promised O'Dowd, intending to spend a small fortune on something "dazzling."

The husband had scarcely departed when the servants, liberally provided with "spending money," were permitted to go out for a holiday. Alone, she set the stage for the last act.

Moving a greenish satin couch on gilded legs into the centre of the most garish room, she carefully closed all doors and windows. Every keyhole, every aperture, no matter how small, received her attention. Her last task was concerned with the chandelier, a monstrous article with many jets. Then everything was ready.

It is not advisable to meddle with the households of city fathers. The attendants of the apartment

house did not force an entrance into the O'Dowd flat until the all-pervading smell of gas could no longer be denied. When at last the doors had been broken down, they found that their delicacy about entering had made them too late to be of assistance. Pauline had chosen, and entered upon, her way.

O'Dowd, at the dive, just returned from the jewelry store, was busily engaged in getting into a festive mood in honour of his wife's recovery. The messenger despatched from the apartment house found it no easy task to state his errand.

"You lie, you dirty hound, you lie!" cried O'Dowd, when at last he understood the purport of the message, and before he threw himself into the carriage which was to convey him to the scene.

His entrance into the chamber of death was the reverse of impressive. Staggering and bleary-eyed he blinked at those in the room—doctors, policemen, and attendants.

"What'd she die for?" he asked absurdly, turning from one to another.

Then he saw the couch in the centre of the room, and with gathering sobriety he flung himself on his knees beside her. For a long time he felt her hair, patted her cheeks, and held her hands, until the sting of personal injury made itself felt.

"So help me God, I loved that woman," he told the bystanders. "I done everything for her, everything. She wanted for nothing. Every day I gave

her things without her asking for them. Look 'round and see the home she had. Piano, and fancy things all over the place—and then she goes and kills herself. What'd she do it for? What'd she do it for?"

The ambulance surgeon, being there in an official capacity, endeavoured to reason with the babbling fool.

"Yes, it is very sad, Mr. O'Dowd, but——"

O'Dowd rose like a maniac.

"What are you people doing in here? Who gave you the right to come in here and see her? Hey, John," this to one of the policemen, "why don't you drive them out? This is my place, d'you hear? Everything here belongs to me, and she, too, she's mine, and——"

He threw himself again beside the couch.

The room was quickly cleared, until only the proper officials remained. There had to be an investigation, but this proceeding is a mere formality when the wives of city fathers furnish the occasion.

O'Dowd scarcely left his place beside the couch. He was beyond all reasoning until he was consulted about the arrangements for the funeral. That roused him.

"She'll have the finest funeral that ever came out of the ward. What do I care for money now? What good is it to me now? I might as well spend it on her funeral than on anything else!"

The undertaker, as the furniture dealer before him, received *carte blanche* and made the most of his opportunity. Perhaps you will pardon this personal note, but I knew the woman. And one who had known her in life without pitying her, deeming her but justly served, would have surely pitied her for her mourners.

As in the Organisation, as in the parades, as on Election Day, so numbers counted in the funeral cortége. Every loafer, tramp, pickpocket, or "grafter" in the district who wanted a free ride and refreshments was welcome to a seat in the coaches. And in spite of his sorrow—which was as sincere as the man was capable of—O'Dowd, who rode alone behind the truckload of flowers and wreaths, could not suppress a feeling of deep gratification on beholding the long string of carriages following in the wake of the silver-plastered casket. It was, indeed, as one of the mourners said, "a grand send-off, and almost worth dying for."

O'Dowd's devotion to his wife had not passed unnoticed. After the funeral, the wiseacres prophesied, with some show of reason, that Jim would "cut loose and go it hard for a good while." He disappointed the prophets. Something was wrong with O'Dowd that never came right again.

His visits to the dive were less frequent. Most of his time was spent in the flat, which had been kept intact. There, alone—the servants had been

discharged—he gave his "feelings" full sway and indulged in many monologues as to the freakishness of life.

"What's the use of all this stuff now? There's that clock! I paid sixty dollars for it. I remember it as if it was yesterday. What good is it now? The first thing I know somebody else'll be using it—but, no, they won't, I'd sooner break it!"

And the poor timepiece, torn from the mantel, crashed to the floor, where gilt chairs and brass lamps had gone before it.

These "feelings" made visible changes in O'Dowd. His personal appearance was first neglected, then it became positively slovenly, and the so hardly acquired touches of refinement vanished without trace.

More serious than the deterioration of his appearance was the neglect of his duties as leader. When, after a reasonable time, his grief showed no signs of abating, the Powers of the Party were obliged to take notice or, perhaps, to discipline. A delegation of three was duly appointed by the executive committee to call on the city father. Their reception was more emphatic than cordial. Without permitting them to enter, O'Dowd consigned them to a region, where, according to orthodox views, all good and practical politicians go—after their demise.

The report of the delegation resulted in the is-

suance of an ukase commanding Jim O'Dowd to appear at once before the committee. But ukases have to be delivered; and the deliverer of the ukase in question, succeeding in having the door of the flat opened to him, intruded at a moment when Jim's "feelings" were exceptionally hard on the ornaments in the apartment, and was greeted by a plaster Cupid, which went to pieces on his skull.

Before the next campaign began O'Dowd's leadership had been transferred to a more rational statesman, and Jim found himself, without minding it, a political "has-been."

He still is master of the dive. His manager does not care to have him there too often. It is not good for trade. Besides his emaciated appearance, which makes him repulsive, he insists on telling his story and describing his "feelings" to everyone willing to listen. And his—as barkeepers will testify—is not a narrative to induce the buying of drinks. So Jim O'Dowd's circle of willing listeners has shrunk to petty thieves and confirmed drunkards, who have to "hang out" at his place because no other place is open to them, and who are always suffering from a shortness of ready cash, which their bard of the woeful tale is always ready to relieve—provided they will sympathise with his "feelings."

And so they sing her requiem.

VII

WHEN THE MIDNIGHT CITY WAKES

IN our last, eternal sleep our souls are home with the Father. As we are sure of that we will not deny that during our temporary sleep, the sleep that comes nightly, at the end of our toil, our souls must be very close to Him. It is a glorious thought to know that each night after the evening prayer our souls and bodies are free from material care, safe in His hands. How cosey, how "comfy" it is to snuggle one's cheek deeper into the downy pillow; how relieving to stretch and relax one's limbs under the warm blankets; how easy we breathe the sigh of utter content and bless the night of rest; how rarely our slumbers are disturbed, unless there is sudden illness or calamity or depressing thought. And, speaking of depressing thoughts, how many of us have ever lost a minute's sleep by the depressing thought of the many sleepless, bedless creatures who walk endless miles while you and I, brethren, snore away in the sleep of the—can I rightly say it?—the just. And there are many who spend their nights in tramping and who, though He watches over them, are far away from Him.

While I have not seen half enough of our glorious country, I have been to several of our larger cities and have compared their conditions to those of the metropolis. I did not expect to find a millennial state of conditions. Long ago I have realised that the poor are always with us. Go where you may, in our present state of social advancement, you will find the poor in city, village, hamlet, and even in the wilderness. So in Boston, Philadelphia, Buffalo, and New Haven I expected to find the poor, and was not disappointed. But in these cities I missed one thing, which is perhaps the saddest, most sorrowful feature of the seedy life in the metropolis. I missed the dread nocturnal procession of the harrowing spectres which trends its way along the streets and avenues of the Empire City night after night, year after year. Well on toward morning I walked the principal streets of the mentioned cities, and the pavements almost resented my intrusion, for in my solitary walk I was alone, the sound of my footfall echoing lonely in the resting city.

How sweet sleep must be when one can be assured that the city's lanes are not crowded with an army of miserables, a horde of restless shades, not one of them having a roof, a pallet to call his own. And because in my city there are many thousands who have neither roof nor coverlet the streets are thronged at night with troops of men, tramping

wearily from midnight till morning. Still, ours is not the city of the sleepless. Insomnia is not sufficiently fashionable to become a fad, and we, of beds, snore and sleep heartily. Why shouldn't we? Are we not tired at the end of day from having worked so much and long—for ourselves?

My town is full of good people who like to hear about the seamy side of life. Why? For the same reason that a warm room feels immensely good after coming from the cold air. They want to hear about it, listen to it with tears in their honest eyes—and then go home to appreciate what they have—no matter how little it might be—and, perhaps, thank God that they do not have to suffer as their less fortunate fellow-creatures. Nevertheless we of the other, the seamy side, cannot afford to keep silent and must keep on talking and writing about the cancers, spreading daily from sheer neglect and indifference. Some day, perhaps, something might come from our talking and writing, when our hearers and readers will grasp the fact with burning consciences that we are talking and writing the truth and that we are doing it, if ineffectively, because it has to be done, for the might of Self is growing and the power of Love seems dead.

And so, hoping that some day these truths will be believed and understood before they are forgotten, I keep on talking and writing about

them, getting a bit of encouragement and indorsement here and there.

One night—it was a night when your thoughts involuntarily stray to wood fires and cosey grates —I was scheduled to speak at one of our churches. I had been left *carte blanche* in the choice of my topic. On my way to the church I arranged my ideas and determined to tell my audience of the fortitude of character of the finest ladies of the land, the mothers of the tenements. I marshalled all the sections of my address and felt assured that I would easily stir the wells of sympathy of my hearers. And then happened one of the little incidents of metropolitan life which made me forsake my first intentions.

The cars were packed, but the streets were deserted and nothing obstructed my view ahead. Looking up to the next corner I saw a cur of the mongrel breed in the familiar attitude of three legs on the ground and the fourth lifted as if appealing or afraid. That sight is familiar to me, but always sad. No man travels the road of destruction without having been propelled to it by some offence of his own or some human reason, but pity the dumb creatures, without wicked intent or sinful design, without their own doing, thrown into the cruel maelstrom of the public highway. If you knew dogs as I do you would grieve at all the true affection and friendship which could be given by those

little four-footed fellows, and which goes to waste because they have no one on whom to lavish their best emotions. But this is the recital of an incident and I must return to it.

Arrived at the corner, I was scrutinised by my waiting friend. Apparently he approved of me. With a hoarse bark he ran down the side street, looking back to make sure that I was following him. Halting at a snow bank, he explained my duty to me. I dragged the thing from its snowy bed and found that I had been none too soon. About sixty years of age, decrepit, illy clad, badly nourished, the old man, homeless for years, would have slept into death in that snowbank had not his only friend, the mongrel cur, called me to the rescue.

To do what was my obvious duty took some time, and I arrived at my church a little late. Also the recent incident had changed my train of thoughts, and instead of presenting my first chosen topic I told of the midnight life in the metropolis. I needed no notes or preparation. Often and often, as boy and man, had I seen that nightly promenade along the highway of the foolish and wicked. The picture was too well engraven on my mind to require much rehearsing.

After the story had been told comments were freely offered. Some said it was sad—that I knew and admitted; others praised me for speaking so

bravely for my fellows, but did not believe me—and the pastor was among them. Withal he is a good man and my friend.

"Kildare," he said, "you're biassed in this. You feel for these fellows and naturally paint their lot in more sympathetic colours and, therefore, exaggerate unconsciously from sheer pity."

To argue is a waste of time when proof is right near at hand.

"If you will come with me and see, my assertions will prove themselves," I challenged him.

The pastor smiled at my guilelessness. My challenge was what he had wanted. I had walked into his trap and he readily came with me, prepared to give me an object lesson on the evils of exaggeration.

There is a beginning to the Bowery as there is to all misery, and there we started. From end to end the Bowery harbours over fifty thousand men in its lodging houses every night. The privilege of rest—sleep cannot be guaranteed, for memories will refuse to be deadened even on the Bowery—can be had from five cents up to twenty-five cents. And because there are men who cannot even earn, beg, steal, or borrow five cents, the nocturnal procession parades every night.

As not a block is without its quota of lodging houses we saw the first one as soon as we left our car. There and further on we saw men descend-

ing the stairs of the lodging houses. It seemed a point against me.

Said the pastor: "Where is your phantom army? All these men seem to be guests at these lodging houses."

Said I: "These men are recruits for the army, hurrying to join the ranks."

In truth they were guests of the lodging houses, but not welcome guests, because not paying, and merely tolerated.

Throughout the day and until midnight the reading-rooms of the lodging houses are packed to suffocation. Half of the men are not patrons of the house, but only come, sneak in, to find a place for a few hours' rest after their nightly tramp. The reading-rooms close at about eleven o'clock. Then the aristocrat, the man who has paid for his bed, retires grandly to his couch, while the other, the outcast for the night, descends the stairs to take up his unwilling vigil.

This I explained to the pastor, who believed in part, yet doubted much.

"Surely," he remarked, "the few men who are compelled to walk the streets because of their inability to pay for their lodging cannot number into the thousands claimed by you."

I merely asked his indulgence for a little more time.

At Canal Street the pastor's attention was at-

tracted by several groups of men who hung about the Bowery Mission. This gave me a cue.

"Let us call on my friend, Superintendent Hallimond, of the Bowery Mission, who is just ready to serve his nightly promenade breakfast," I suggested.

We entered the mission and went to the basement. Mountains of rolls, barrels of coffee were waiting to be devoured.

"How many do you feed here?" I asked for my pastor's enlightenment.

"The baker is ordered to leave fifteen hundred rolls here every night."

"How often do you serve this breakfast?"

"Every midnight, from January until May."

The pastor looked grave, still fifteen hundred are not thousands.

Then the doors were opened. They squirmed, fought, crept, pushed, sneaked, rolled their way into the basement. Before they had scarcely passed your vision the fifteen hundred were inside—and more hundreds outside were clamouring for admittance.

We stood aside and viewed the terrible throng. Among them were many familiar faces.

"How long have you known me?" I asked one in the line.

"Oh, about ten or twelve years," was the uncertain reply.

I asked others the same question and received similar answers, which I augmented with the information that during all these years these friends of the breakfast line had looked, and been the same, as on this night when my pastor's eyes were opened.

"But how could that have been? What kept them down so long and so tenaciously?" he questioned me in bewilderment.

But on that night I was with him to show my proofs and not to answer questions, of which he should have known the responsibility better than I. Besides, my case was only partly proven.

"Come," said I, and we journeyed on.

Four blocks further on, in shadow of the elevated railway pillars, shivering and stamping, another drear, long line of now familiar spectres stood.

"Scarcely a thousand," I whispered to my pastor; "still, a fair-sized mob."

A private charity this, the hundreds come here every night in every season to get their bread and coffee and other scraps left by less hungry ones, their breakfast at the waking of the midnight city.

We did not linger long, as much was still before us, but when we left my friend the pastor looked a great deal graver.

"Come," again I said and led on but three blocks before another waiting crowd greeted us from the

corner of a side street. Here a policeman was needed to keep the men in line and order. They had waited there for hours—and what for? The half of a loaf of bread—and then tell me that begging isn't the hardest kind of work. As the line began to move to pass the door of the mammoth bakery for the patiently earned portion of the staff of life, I turned again to my friend.

"Come," I said, still anxious to prove my case.

"No, no, I have seen enough."

"But there is more to see and all of the same sort," I remonstrated, but the pastor weakened.

"Oh, this is pitiful, dreadful!" he cried.

"It is all that," I admitted, "and more—it is wicked."

And so it is, look at it from whatever standpoint you may.

Most of the men are physically able. If willing to work, why can't we provide it for them; if too lazy to work, why can't we make them work? It does not seem right that the felon in prison should have the state give him paternal care, give him bed, food, clean linen, medical attendance, and all the other necessaries of life, while the fellow of the midnight army, who has not broken a law of the commonwealth, has nothing but the street for shelter and nothing but the crumbs of charity for food.

Why is it that men of splendid attainments and

education are thick in these ranks? And they are not all drunkards.

It's wickedness, shameful wickedness, that we, who love to crow so much and who never tire of posing to the rest of the world as the enlighteners of the age, the inventors of all inventions, the pioneers in all progress, cannot devise a way to keep, in the richest city of the richest land, our fellow-beings from the nocturnal procession. And it's wicked because we have the money for relief, and give it, but have not the time to spend our intelligence on such a "trivial and profitless matter."

Time and again have I asked the question, "What will you do about it?" and always my answer has been a shrug of the shoulders and, "What can we do about it?"

Nature is well balanced within itself and has a cure for every illness. There also is and must be a remedy for this cancer of the tramping spectres, foisting on our social growth, but we are too busy to look for it in our souls and minds. It is so easy and convenient to supply the sinews for the philanthropic war when one is rated among the multi-millionaires, but we, who are far below the seven-figure mark, cannot make that the excuse for our indifference. Let us be less selfish and let us be oftener beside the one who needs our help and more the help of our intelligence than the help of our pocketbook.

I do not advocate the promiscuous giving of alms. The mite given to the whining mendicant is a debt unpaid to the suffering widow. Neither do I deny that the work is hard, thankless, and slow of results. The fallen man generally falls so low that he thinks himself beyond all human aid. We of average means cannot defray the cost of lifting the being fallen to the gutter and placing him solidly back on to the rock of former respectability. If there were a mutual desire for rehabilitation, if the man whom we would help would work with us in redeeming him, the task would be more possible, more hopeful. But the percentage of those who would do this is small, incredibly small. Let the germ of lodging-house existence once get into the life of the man who has come to travel the highway of the foolish and wicked and he will be soundly afflicted with that dread disease—carelessness. It cannot be called hopelessness, because hopelessness involves a certain amount of mental activity to realise its existence. It is a drifting, a sliding to nowhere. All things—the things which are part of our life, like eating and sleeping—come to these men in the way of surprises. Their sustenance does not depend on their efforts, but merely on their "luck." Most of them have not even the energy to beg. Frequently I have gone to lodging houses with offers to put a number of the idling men to work at different employment, but instead

of having my offers accepted readily, I fairly had to coax them to come with me.

How then do they live?

They do not live, but merely exist on the chances and the good-natured indulgence of the metropolis. There is much so-called charity in our city and one need not starve. Most times it is not even necessary to ask. All that is required to get a meal is to stand in line on the street until the charitable doors are opened—and that, too, helps to blunt the already dulled sensibilities. Also, there are many kind-hearted people in the city, whose pity is aroused by the forlorn appearance of these soldiers of the spectre army, and alms are frequently given without having been solicited. And that, too, comes under the heading of "luck."

And again I say that it is wicked to have and to tolerate such a state of conditions. The proprietor of a manufacturing plant is very careful that no part of his machinery is permitted to fall into decay without having all its usefulness exhausted. But in the lodging houses of the Bowery, energy, mental and muscular, the mightiest part of mightiest machinery, is permitted to go to waste and rot. Yet, what of it? Who cares? We, the more fortunate, are also inflicted with that dread disease, carelessness, and so long as we get "ours"—no matter how we get it—we do not care much for aught else.

Still, to despair would be sinful, and it is a safe prophecy that some day we will assay this great mass of useless humanity with the acid of honest work and will sift from it men for the shops and factories and fields and men for the workhouse: And the day will surely come when the whining wail of the mendicant will be changed to the clanging anvil song of toil, the divine epic of man's honest labour. The shibboleth of loaferdom, "I can't find work," is long exploded, and it is our duty to prove it.

It did not take us long to come to these conclusions, because sameness makes deductions easy, and here was sameness everywhere. My pastor, saddened and disproven, wanted to get away from this sight of human wreckage. But he was in my realm, my old hunting grounds, and not wishing to have him leave with the impression that in my bailiwick only drones were to be found, I prepared to show him another picture of a different sort in my own territory.

Making our way through parks where men were fighting for the possession of benches to stretch their limbs until the cold or the policeman put them again in motion, and through quiet streets in the business section, where we saw men huddled in the shelters of empty packing cases to protect themselves from the chilling blasts of night, we reached at last the point where we had started. We

turned southward and a few steps brought us to a region which was the absolute extreme of the land of idleness just left by us.

Emerging from the obscure purlieus of Park Row—the continuation of the Bowery—we stepped into a haze of shriller shade, in which moist vapours told us of the presence of that great master workman, steam. My pastor gazed at the bright vision before him, for even the many lights betokened a sphere of activity. Then, as we stood there, and just as the golden hands on the clock of St. Paul's Church met at II. to breathe to one another their good morning kiss, we felt the very earth beneath us shake off its last remnant of lethargy. From the pressrooms underneath the walks came rumbling, throbbing noises, increasing with each revolution of the intelligent iron monsters until the streets re-echoed with a great sounding anthem, a grand triumphal song of brain, energy, and industry. And from the towering chimneys on the roofs above us, in darkish, smokish clouds, or whitish, willowy streamers, this other waking of the Midnight City was heralded to all the world.

Here—what a contrast to what we had left!—were no drones. The very air about us thrilled with a strenuousness in which the fraction of each second was surcharged with an awakening responsibility.

Clusters of boys and men were hanging about

the different newspaper offices. My pastor thought he had stumbled across a splendid opportunity for charity and encouragement. Putting his hand into his pocket, he approached a boy who stood at the curb in front of the distributing room of a newspaper.

"Here, my poor boy," he said. "You must be cold and hungry. Take this and——"

"Don't do it, doctor," I stopped him. Then I turned to the boy. "You're waiting for your papers, aren't you?"

"Surest thing you know."

"You're not broke and you don't want anybody to give you any money?"

"Well, I guess not," said my little pal, pulling a handful of pennies from his pocket. "I got eighteen cents for stock money and I'd like to see any o' the other kids beat me on that."

Bully for you, Young America, but—some of the spectre army also had that spirit at your age.

Every profession and trade has its spectacular side, but none can compare with the pageantry of feverish intensity displayed at this shipping of journalistic ware. And the handlers of it, the men and the boys, glory in the rivalry of their vigour. They know that moments count, and hustle their bundles into the waiting waggons, while the atmosphere is permeated with the damp, inky smell, so dear to this midnight crew. And mighty interests all bow to

this dominating profession which thrives so well at night.

Uncle Sam on wheels has precedence over all others, even when only represented by the night-hawk mail waggon. All must give way to him, even ambulances and fire engines. Now, when a railroad system, a ferry company, a number of trolley lines, and even Uncle Sam, unite in smoothing the way for another power, that power certainly must be a mighty one.

While the last bundles of newspapers are thrown into the waiting delivery waggons the track is being cleared for the races of the night. The ferryboat from the Jersey shore backs into its slip and is ready for another load of passengers and freight. But no waggon or vehicle is permitted to get on board. Mail waggons, milk carts, farmers' trucks are ranged in line beside the ferry entrance and must be careful not to encroach even an inch on the roadway which leads to the boat. Eventually several policemen appear from their various hiding-places and cosey corners and lend their pompous dignity to the scene. The trackman at the intersecting crossings of the trolley lines lights a red lamp and assumes an air of great suspense. Warnings to the stranger to get out of the way are plentiful and forcible. The quiet becomes more and more oppressive, and—what is it all about?

They will not answer you, but might point up

Cortlandt Street. You look up that deserted, empty street, on which not a living being is visible, and doubt the reason of your informant. But just as you are about completely disgusted with all this tomfooling and give one last look up Cortlandt Street, you see a tiny black spot popping into sight around the distant corner of Broadway. And there are more and more black specks, and before your eye has winked again a Bedlam on wheels comes like a maddened, maddening torrent, clashing, clattering, roaring, tearing, with all the fury of cyclonic gait, through the dark canyon of the narrow street. The swirling wheels strike angry sparks, the horses are flecked with froth from their own mouths, but on they go.

There is no turning of heads. All urge forward. The race through the last block becomes a wild chaos of snorting horses, swaying waggons, and whipping, shouting crazy men, until they all—men, waggons, horses—crash on to the boat, with only half their run accomplished. After them comes not the deluge, but just the other ordinary trash on wheels.

The boat does not lose a moment in starting. While in transit the men sort their papers and get them ready for train delivery in Jersey, where the race is continued. There the road is also cleared for them until the papers are flung into the waiting cars and the trains carry them to their ultimate

destinations. But there the pastor and I did not follow.

We turned homeward.

Passing the newspaper offices where a few minutes ago all had been hustling and struggling, we met a crowd of men, jaded and tired. Their work had just been finished. They were the men who, each in his own way and place, had put their very best of mind and soul into the sheets now travelling westward; who had scribbled and clipped, had 'phoned and clicked, had been going at nerve-killing pitch throughout this long night that the readers might have their paper with the breakfast coffee. No, facetiousness should not revile the truth. I have met these brainy workers of the midnight hours, I have worked with them, and know how high their aims do aspire. Little of sordidness is among them, but much of nobility of spirit, much devotion to duty and true friendship. Among them I have learned to understand the power of the press, and from among them came the man who told me that to become a worthy writer one must always write the truth and write upward.

My pastor was tired. He scarcely glanced at the tired writers, those faithful workers of the night who never meet the idle wanderers of the street. Their ways lie far apart, for the former are men of highest industry, the others are men of lazy carelessness—and oil and water do not mix.

We had seen the extremes of conditions in the waking hours of the midnight city, and it had stirred our pity and our pride. Our walk had also given us food for thought, and it is my hope that the recital of our experience will also induce my readers to think about the condition mentioned here, and, perhaps, suggest a remedy.

VIII

A LEGATEE OF LOVELESSNESS

AMONG the many unheard-of things in the slums is the science of genealogy. Owing to the absence of the genealogical fad, the origin and ancestry of the Kid were shrouded in densest obscurity. Had it not been for the racial mosaic in his features, the accident of his birth would have passed entirely without comment. But the composite effect of the formation, angle, and colouring of his face was such that no one could see it without feeling a desire to "know all about it."

Questions like "Of what nationality are you?" "Where were you born" "Who was your father?" became so frequent and monotonous that the Kid fled at the approach of persons unknown to him.

They of the neighbourhood—Chinatown and its immediate vicinity—were divided into two factions concerning the Kid's classification. One-half thought it evident that the Kid was negro and white, while the other half was just as certain that he was Chinese and white. The factions never got into heated controversies about this difference of opinion. They were content to "let it go at that," and never "lost any sleep over it."

The Kid's existence was so matter-of-fact that he was the last to be bothered by the shadow of the bar sinister. His days were so taken up with the striving after the attainable that he had no time for unprofitable speculation. To balance his life well was his aim. The prevailing tone of the locality was not against work, but liked it best in small doses, while viciousness was preferred to out-and-out criminality. So the Kid wanted to strike a fair medium between having to work and having to steal for a living.

To accomplish his purpose, the Kid had to overcome many obstacles. But the most severe handicap was that he had to fight and stay entirely alone. His racial legacy was answerable for this.

Children are gregarious. The Kid, too, before he understood, had tried to join the playing children on the smooth asphalt pavement in Mott Street. His début counted few minutes. The horde of boys and children immediately formed itself into a charging mob, and, crying "Chink! chink!" in vindictive derision, drove the Kid away. And they were not all white children. Many Chinese tots, in many-coloured costumes, were on the side of caste-defence. Youthful discretion had drawn rigid lines. They of the rainbow-hued garments were pure "Chinese," while he of the mosaic features was mongrel, and therefore "Chink."

Not imbued with revolutionary tendencies, the

Kid accepted conditions as they were and lived alone. A few of the women in Pell Street employed him for occasional errands, and the Kid, with a certain degree of safety, could figure on at least four nights a week in bed and a mildly fluctuating bill-of-fare.

His rapidly growing stoicism helped him to look at the situation without much dissatisfaction. He felt that, so far as eating and sleeping were concerned, "he had no kick coming." His pleasures were confined to watching the playing children in Mott Street from a very, very safe distance—and envying them.

One day he appeared followed by a dog. In the opinion of those who deigned to notice the pair they were well matched; the dog, too, showed the bar sinister. Knowing the peculiar spirit of the neighbourhood, the Kid did not think it wise to mingle too freely among the people with his new find. The Power house in Bayard Street, with deep doorways and corners affording some seclusion, was, therefore, chosen as future "hang-out."

To see a tandem of stray waif and stray dog is no unusual sight in that bailiwick. But that the Kid, apparently the most uncompanionable of boys, should have formed such a partnership invited attention.

I spoke to him about it.

"Where did you get the dog, Kid?"

"What dog?" A strainedly puzzled expression was forced to take the place of self-consciousness.

I pointed at the mongrel sunning itself at the curb.

"Him? He don't belong to me. He's only laying there. He's only a mut."

Passing the Power house that night I noticed the Kid and the dog huddling together in a sheltering corner. A few mumbled words made me halt, and, leaning against the railing, I could observe without being observed. Fragmentary phrases came to me in the staccato speech of street-Arabia.

"You're me dog, ain't you?" "They ain't going to swipe you, because you ain't much, but you're all right at that, and, anyway, I couldn't have nothing better nohow." "You and me is friends, ain't we?" All this was accompanied by boyish hugs and canine kisses.

My interest did not abate, and a few days later I again asked the Kid how he and the dog "were making out."

"Ain't I told you he ain't me dog?" he answered angrily. "He's only a mut."

"But you are always together."

"Well, what can I do if he keeps follering me 'round? Gee, I wouldn't have a pup like that."

It cannot be surmised if the Kid would have permanently denied his ownership of the dog. At every inquiry about "his" dog the Kid would claim

that the mongrel was not "his'n," and it needed a catastrophe to settle the relationship.

It had been a stifling hot day in June. Even the "old clo'es" market at the end of Bayard Street had closed its haggling strife earlier than usual. The street—saving an occasional policeman leaving or entering the station house across the way—was deserted. The heat under foot and overhead—the Kid's extremities were unprotected at both ends—had exhausted the boy, and, followed by the dog, he sought the shadows of the Power house.

It was too hot to talk or do anything, and, ere long, the Kid had drowsed into slumber. The dog would have followed the master's example, but the flies were peskily annoying, and, worse, a tantalising smell came from the tinker-shop next door. It was a smell of frying and cooking, and went right to the very insides of his dogship.

To resist such allurement was beyond the power of doggish endeavour. Besides, as master and dog had often visited the kitchens of friendly shopkeepers, the duty of investigation was obligatory. The dog rose, stared at the boy with mute invitation, and slunk to the tinker-shop.

His partner had scarcely disappeared through the door of the shop when the Kid awoke with a yawn. The absence of the dog was noticed immediately.

"I bet some o' them fresh dago kids from the

next block got away with him. Maybe I won't soak some o' them if they got the pup," murmured the Kid, and started in pursuit.

He had just reached the tinker-shop when something, in sweeping curve, came from the doorway and landed in the street with grunting thud.

Without wasting word or look, the Kid swerved from the sidewalk and lifted the doomed mongrel to his arms from the pitiless street. Just a trifle paler, he restrained his fury until he stood before the sergeant's desk in the station house. Then he literally howled for vengeance. The officers laughed, took the whimpering animal by force to put it out of misery, and told the boy to get himself another dog.

Seeing that no redress was obtainable, he asked them to mind his dog's body, and started on another errand. The crowd which always, and seemingly from nowhere, gathers around the station house stoop at the slightest provocation, jeered and sneered, but the Kid did not even see them.

Within an hour he returned with a "society's agent." The case proved too weak for prosecution; the agent assured himself that the dog had been humanely put to death, and, with a word of consolation to the Kid, departed.

The tinker could not forego the pleasure of enjoying his victory, and stepped to the door to gloat over the defeated champion of the mongrel cur.

"Say, Kid, so you was going to have me arrested for finishing that kyoodle o' your'n?"

The Kid did not fly into a passion.

"You wait! You just wait! I'll get hunk on you before night," he growled, and scowled.

The Kid hung about until the lamps in the tinker's store windows were lighted. As soon as darkness had settled he ran to the corner, where a new tenement house was in course of construction, and helped himself liberally from a pile of bricks. In less than a minute its usual allowance of nightly excitement had been furnished to the street. The windows of the tinshop were wrecked, the tinker was making his frantic complaint to the sergeant at the station house, and the Kid, in the grasp of a policeman, and oblivious to the comments of the crowd, stood quietly awaiting his fate.

"What d'you do it for?" asked the sergeant, leaning over the desk.

"He killed me dog."

"That doesn't give you the right to smash his windows, does it?"

"I don't care. He killed me dog."

"Oh, you don't care? Well, then, you'll get locked up, and stay there till you grow up and know better than to break people's windows."

"I don't care. He killed me dog, and if I got to go to jail I'll kill him when I get out," said the Kid, without vehemence, and looking straight at

the sergeant. "And if I don't get out, me friends'll kill him," was added as an afterthought.

Poor Chink! The stress of the moment inspired him to claim for his own what he had never had—friends.

"Oh, you're a killer, are you?" commented the sergeant. "Then I can see your finish. They'll take all that killing business out of where you're going, Chink."

"They can't. I'm going to get hunk on him—or me friends is," insisted the Kid as they led him away.

This unbending spirit of revenge seemed unnatural in a boy. Neither sorrow nor fury brought tears, the weapon and solace of children, to his eyes.

I went to the "prisoner's pen" in the court-house to see if the Kid was prepared to take his "medicine." His mood was unchanged, and my greeting was a sullen scowl.

"I suppose you are sorry for what you did last night?" I asked.

"I ain't sorry for nothing," he answered, with flashing eyes. "Me—me dog ain't alive no more this morning than he was last night, and—but you see if I don't get hunk on that guy. I'll do him the minute I get out."

"You must stop that sort of talk. Besides, you haven't been sent away yet."

The Kid looked at me with a mingling of contempt and worldly wisdom.

"Ah, what's the use o' talking like that? What chance do I stand?"

It was true. He was of no moment to the leader of the district, had no friends to intercede, and stood absolutely no chance. To incite false hopes in him would have been cruel, and the best I could do was to paint his lot in milder colours.

"It isn't half as bad at the Refuge as you boys think it is. Be a good boy, do your work well, and you'll forget all about this by the time you get out."

"Ah, why don't you chase yourself?" came with accentuated hardness. "What'll I be a good boy for? And I ain't going to forget, neither."

Before I could get the Kid to take a more hopeful view of the situation his name was called and he was taken to the court-room. I did not follow. His fate was ordained, and only the routine had to be observed. But the judge was known to be a man given to much fatherly lecturing, and I half expected to see the Kid return with a tear-stained face. They shortly brought him back—and his eyes were still dry and hard.

"Well, I got it all right," he said, perfectly unmoved. "Say, that guy up in court, that judge, he don't know nothing about law. I told him all about it, that all I done was to get hunk on the

tinker, and then he starts in telling me that I was wicked and all that kind o' stuff. There ain't no justice when a tinker can go to work and kill me only—me dog. But I'll do him when I——"

"Look here, Kid," I interposed. "Be a man and stop your bragging talk. You got your 'bit,' and now make up your mind to do it, and to get out as soon as you can. And then, if you have behaved yourself and need a friend, you can come to me and——"

"Gee, I don't need no friends. I got lots o' them," lied the boy deliberately. "Only I didn't want any o' them to know that I got pinched for anything like this, and that's the reason there ain't any o' them here. And you,—I bet you'd forget all about me by the time I get out."

Before I could assure him of my lasting memory he was taken to the wire-screened waggon of the institution. The departure was delayed for a few moments, another boy just "getting settled," but my efforts had been so unproductive of cheering or impressing the boy that I did not force myself on him any longer, and remained in the doorway of the court building. His efforts to avoid my eyes were most conspicuous.

Then the other boy was escorted to the waggon, and I prepared to leave. I intended to say farewell to the Kid, but he anticipated me and called me to the waggon.

"Say, did you mean what you said inside?" he asked in a whisper.

Taking me unaware, I did not know instantly to what he referred.

"Oh, you know," continued the Kid, shamefacedly, "that about you being me friend, provided I——"

"Oh, that!" I cried. "Why, of course, Kid, I mean it."

"Well, you know, most o' me friends is liable to be away, or moved, or something, by the time I get out, and I thought maybe I—you—anyway, I guess I'll think it over."

The day was hot. The flies were out in full force and must have bothered the Kid, for just as the waggon turned the corner I saw his hand go to his face.

The Kid thought it over.

IX

THE WELCOME OF THE CITY

THE contemporaneous history of our great cities gives abundant proof that practically all of the men to the fore in municipal and industrial affairs are not natives of the city of their adult residence, but are immigrants, having come to the sphere of their most profitable usefulness from rural communities. Newspapers and periodicals persist in offering us the biographies of these men, and their triumphal, if strenuous, progress toward success is supposed to incite the youth of the land to go and do likewise. Perhaps these biographical stimulants have helped some to make their fortunes—if gifted with the knack of reading between the lines—yet, at best, the value of these highly coloured testimonies of efficiency is very problematical.

The day seems past when the country lad, duly garnished with whisps of hay and carpet-bag, found this make-up his best recommendation and passport into the very innermost offices of great merchant princes. These same merchant princes have no compunction about lauding the country boy at the many gatherings graced by their presence

and eloquence of a certain sort, and with tears in their soulful eyes they will tell you how their hearts go out to the timid lad from the flowery fields, but the soulful eyes and the beating hearts will, on the morrow, be safely screened behind mahogany partitions, behind which the lured lad from Spofford's Corners can never penetrate.

And growl about the dearth of American humourists! Attend one of these spreads, at which some self-made captain of industry is advertised to tell how it happened, and you will find the formula, which he guarantees to have been the one to help him to his millions, the neatest bit of salient wit. Approaching in humour is the frenzied endeavour of some of our fellow-millionaires to save themselves and families the unpardonable disgrace of dying rich. Neither should we overlook the contraposition of some of their advice. "Go West, young man, go West," sounds somewhat unconvincing, when uttered by one who came the other way and stuck there against all endeavours and offers of free transportation to ship them out, way out West.

So much for the one side. The other side, also, will prove that the country lad has shown remarkable adaptability.

Police and prison records prove beyond a doubt that the leaders in criminal pursuits are country born. It is an established fact that the shrewdest

confidence men, the most daring burglars, and the most desperate train robbers are products of the soil, which gives us besides corn, buckwheat, and David Harums. Even our great financial crooks, after wrecking banks or corporations, point with justifiable pride at their humble beginning there where the old oaken bucket provides primitive tipple. A casual observer might be led to believe that the old order of things has been reversed. The "Hayseed" is no longer in danger of "being done" by the city sharp; he is prepared and ready for a little "doing" on his own account. Corroborative proof of this came to my notice the other day in the advertising columns of a periodical: "How to Beat Wall Street, will bring you millions. Address Box 156, Oshkosh, Rural Delivery."

If one is sufficiently unsophisticated to accept the rhetorical indorsements of the country boy at their face value, one will be compelled to believe that at spelling bees and other social functions in our rural territories the welfare of our cities furnishes the one topic of edifying discussion. Could one believe these tales one would see at once that the propelling motive which is responsible for this immigration is a great desire for our reformation. We are bad, rotten to the core, and nothing but the pure humanitarian self-sacrifice of Ebenezer or Hiram can prevent us of the city from being eternally damned. And so, propelled by this noble motive,

these crusaders of political and commercial purity tear themselves away from their homesteads and offer themselves to the commonwealths to make them as good and pure—as themselves.

Noble lads, may Heaven visit some function upon you.

That occasionally a brave country boy finds the road to riches sprinkled with too many obstacles is owing to the lack of organisation. A body of men having for its aim the amelioration of the human race at the expense of personal sacrifice, *viz.*, the united miners, plasterers, truckdrivers, bartenders, barbers, and walking delegates, must be thoroughly organised to be of greatest boon to the community. Were the "United Rural Invaders" better organised it is safe to say that not one of them would ever fall by the wayside of the road to riches.

As it is, the city is still empty and still beckoning the lad of the fields to come and bring his much-needed sinew and brains to invigorate the effete resources of the mighty whirlpool. And because this call is not always understood, and because the "United Rural Invaders" are not yet solidly established, a straw-haired lad from verdures green will frequently find his reception in the city not the most cordial thing in the world.

Next to the circus, the travelling salesman is most welcome in small towns and villages as entertainer.

Wherever his basis, it becomes for the time being the hub of the community. By the very nature of his calling the drummer is a sociable creature, and it is no difficult matter to entertain a crowd of minds satiated with such thrilling news items as offered by the town sheet. To read day after day in the personal column—"Mary Corncob, having wrenched her knee, is having it rubbed with kerosene by her sister, Lizzie"; "John Chadlin drove through Muncy yesterday. Let her drive, John." and so forth—will produce a state of mind that will even be susceptible to the humour supposedly lurking in the prehistoric gag, "Why does a chicken cross the street?"

The drummer must expand his popularity. Every man, woman, or child met by him can be of use to him, and he must play the agreeable to all. Scarcely a drummer trails the road who has not a fund of risque and daring stories, plentifully supplemented by a budget of recent city scandal. The older inhabitant has his memory refreshed by these tales—he has been to the city: the youth has his curiosity awakened—and determines to see these things for himself in the city. But to his parents he will interpret his longing as a holy desire to go into the world to make his fortune, to liquidate the mortgage, and to enable Sister Melinda to become a subscription agent for a home periodical.

The fate of these boys in the city is invariably

sad and terminates badly. Knowing the city only from the drummer's tales, they are attracted by the cesspools and become submerged in them. I have been told that, once upon a time, boys went to the city to leave fewer mouths to feed at home, to find education or a living, even a fair competence, and that, above all, they were reasonable in their aims. Now, with so many from the field and farm among the money kings and magnates, the boys come largely with but the one desire—to emulate these high priests of the golden calf.

Of one thing we can be fairly certain: country boys arriving in the city are never bothered with excess baggage in money. Brought up in frugality, compelled to it by shortness of means, they, somehow, locate themselves in such neighbourhoods in the city where frugality and penuriousness live as twins. I am not the one to advise wastefulness or extravagance, but there is such a thing as erring on the side of wisdom. Frugality in the city is accompanied by many deteriorating conditions. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other large cities all have certain localities which are notorious for their "cheapness." Yet, besides this reputation for inexpensiveness, these neighbourhoods are also notorious for less innocent traits. The "cheapness" of food, lodging, and other necessaries attracts the most undesirable patronage and precludes any pretence at quality. But to these localities the lad from

the country possessed of frugal habits will drift unconsciously. Perhaps he saves in pocket by his stay in these surroundings, but yet the margin is dearly paid for by the associations formed, the germs caught there.

It has been my good fortune to be of service to some of these friendly invaders, and, also, it has been my lot to watch the freakish careers of a number of them.

Let me cite the case of a devotee to frugality.

Edward H. came from "up the State" to the city about three years ago. His assets consisted of twelve dollars and a wondrously well developed appetite. Responsible for his coming was the fragment of a speech delivered by a native son of the hamlet at the occasion of his immortalisation *via* a drinking pump for man and beast at the cross-roads.

The fragment, according to Edward H., ran as follows: "I don't want to insult your intelligence, my fellow-citizens, by claiming that I have more brain than you. All of you have as much brain as I have and could have as much money as I have if you were willing to go after it. You all remember how poor I was when I left here for the city. And I am here to tell you that if any of you were to start for the city to-morrow, as I did many years ago, it is almost a certainty that you, too, would be able to accumulate wealth and could come back to

your native town to build pumps or other useful and lasting memorials of your industry. Never let anybody tell you that there are no more millions to be had in the city. There are many millions waiting and ready for those who will take the trouble to go and look for them."

Edward H. had been taught to follow good advice and determined to go to the city to look around for those waiting millions.

His leave-taking was sad, yet inspiring. With his last look at the old homestead he began to speculate how it would look in after years, when pictured as "His Birthplace." He also determined to suggest to the parent in his very first letter from the city—some things are more safely told by mail—to trim his whiskers in more patriarchal style, to be in better accordance with the caption of the future portrait, "His Father, a Prominent and Leading Citizen of Horse's Neck."

Then he humped himself to the depot, fairly regretting the fact that his pocket was burdened with those twelve big silver dollars, instead of that "dollar an' a half," the proverbial starting capital of all self-made millionaires.

As the others before him, Edward H. found his way to the "fifteen-cent bunk" on the Bowery. Next door was a restaurant that gave "square" meals for ten cents; all around were "nickel" barber shops, cut-rate Chinese laundries, washing shirts

for five cents and other articles proportionately cheap; second-hand clothing stores, where men could buy suits of clothes from one dollar up, and all the other commodities of life were offered equally cheaply. It was an easy problem to figure out that, at this low rate of expenses, a month could be safely employed in looking around for the millions or even a rather comfortable and light job.

Edward H. landed there three years ago, and is still there. And why? Because he did not consider that in the city, much less than in the country, a man cannot live alone, but is dependent on environment, associations, and conditions. His companions in that "fifteen-cent bunk" were men who had come there through some mental defect, culminating in the entire "swearing-off" from all honest, steady work. These men, once stranded on the Bowery, only leave there by a miracle, and miracles do not happen every day. Their whole striving consists in devising some means, other than work, to prolong their existence, and they become permanent features of this weird and filthy nether-world Bohemia. If they do not actually lead youths astray, they are powerful forces for evil by their ever-present example.

The frugality of Edward H. was helped along by the counsel of his new-found friends. It was foolish, they told him, to pay ten cents for a meal when

he could get as good for a nickel. Of course, these hints always obliged him to pay the hinter with a meal or something equally as welcome, but, eventually, he found himself endeavouring to demonstrate on how little a man could keep alive, meaning thereby expenses, sustenance—and work.

An easy prey to the virus of perdition, Edward H. became a recruit of the vast army of "has-beens" without knowing it. And his downfall was not accomplished by the drinking and dancing places of the district, but by his constant contact and intercourse with other men, who, through their failure, had been compelled to solve the riddle of frugality and had mastered the knowledge of living on almost nothing in the midst of plenty. A few months of this sort of life sapped his manhood, and, after that, Edward H. did not care. He is still far from the waiting millions, and the picture of "His Birthplace" is still unpainted.

As not all boys from the country migrate to the slum and dive districts of the cities as their future field of activity, I want to cite the case of another lad, who never came near the haunts of the openly wicked and yet fared no better than Edward H.

Walter F. first appeared in this city about four years ago. He came from quite a distance, was a member of a somewhat prominent family in his locality, and had received a fair education at a near-by academy. The veneer of education dis-

closed to him at once the fact that he was too good for his own township. To the metropolis he felt himself mysteriously called.

Much better provided with funds than the average invader, Walter F. established himself at a modest Broadway hotel. His academy finish had eliminated most of the "Rube characteristics" and he had the satisfaction of walking along Broadway without being unduly stared at.

It did not take him long to find that his plum was not yet ready to drop, and he thought it advisable to exchange his hotel for a decent boarding house. The terms asked—ten dollars—were a little more than he had intended to pay, but the landlady seemed a woman of refinement and the house had a certain, if shabby, air of gentility.

At the table to which he was assigned by the landlady he made the acquaintance of two young ladies and a young man. The two young women were self-supporting, one being a stenographer, the other a saleswoman, while the young man was a city salesman. In return for this information Walter F. told his table acquaintances that he had come to the city to "make his fortune." Of course, they laughed—they had heard that theme before in many variations—yet they offered their aid, and, at any rate, promised to make him less lonesome.

We must be fair to the acquaintances of Walter F. The selfishness of the city had eaten to their

very bones. They had their lesson learned and their primer had impressed upon them to be always on the lookout for a "good thing." Walter F. did not display a stringency of financial resources—not until it was too late—and the self-supporting crew of wreckers were successful in engineering many luncheons and parties at the expense of the country lad.

At last the day came when it dawned on Walter F. that work, immediate work, must be procured. His academy finish and recently acquired worldly wisdom were not of much avail, and it was pointed out to him with convincing bluntness that he had to begin at the bottom, no matter where he might apply.

In this dilemma his friend, the city salesman, showed up splendidly and put him into a place which paid just enough to defray his board. There Walter F. went to work and there he has remained. He has been promoted since then, but the promotion was not in correspondence with his length of service. The truth is that he is not deemed an exceedingly valuable employee. He does his work fairly well, but no more than that, and, nowadays, employers look for the right kind of spirit in every performance.

It is impossible for Walter F. to change his mode of life. The impressions received by him during his first plastic period in the city have proven last-

ing ones, and his sallow complexion, his smart "get-up," his associates, and his frequent 'phoning to a well-known poolroom prove that he is head and heels in the swim of city life.

In spite of all this there are people who still believe in him and his future. Chiefest of these is his old mother. Still, it taxes all of her devotion to believe in her son, who is so busy that he can find but rarely the time to "dash off" a line to his best, dearest old friend.

I know lads from the country not sufficiently bright or energetic to compete with the trials of the city, and now completely submerged in the swamp of misery, but, withal, they were sinners and honest in their striving and they do not write home because their hearts are fairly breaking with the bitterness of the shame of their incompetence, and, though it is wrong to leave the old folks in ignorance, I can understand it. But show me the lad from the country who becomes so engrossed with the affairs of the city that he "simply can't find the time" to write home that letter, which is awaited with prayers by the loved ones far away, and I will show you a bad and wicked man, unworthy of your confidence.

Of course, no one will claim that every farmer lad is destined to "go to the bad." A great many of them arrive in the city properly fortified with letters of introduction, are received by friends or

relatives, and, most likely, become members of respectable households. Yet the great majority come here as little prepared as if it was all a jest and not the most important step of their lives.

In these days, when every new fad and fancy can have millions of supporters and millions for support, it is strange that no more is done intelligently to welcome the country lad to the city, where, it is claimed, his brains and brawn are so sorely needed. Side issues of municipal government are constantly busy with assuming parental responsibilities. The city whelp is not permitted to roam at large and according to his free will and the carelessness of his parents. The city will feed, clothe, school, and even scrub the neglected kid of the tenement. But the invading boy from the farm is permitted to do as he pleases and is left undisturbed until he breaks the laws of the city, which, alas, he does only too frequently.

And at this point it would be quite fitting to have it pointed out that a number of semi-charitable institutions are always ready to receive the poor wanderer from the fields. But it should not be forgotten that these institutions carry a special line of redeemed brands from the burning, and that most of them are far from being permanently reformed. To come into contact with this human scum, always the object point of maudlin and ill-directed sentimentality, will contaminate anybody,

and particularly the lonely boy from the homestead in the country.

Also, a certain class of lodging houses are frequently mentioned in this connection as affording temporary stopping-places for the fortune-hunting lad. These lodging houses have sprung up within the last few years and are supposed to be another contribution to philanthropy by a celebrated millionaire. That they have proven themselves to be most satisfying investments is nothing to the discredit of the founder, but that he could not have foreseen that they would develop into hang-outs of petty thieves and birthplaces of many crooked schemes speaks badly for the intellectual quality of his benevolent investment. It is along the usual tenor of present-day philanthropy: the discovery of a fancied and imaginary need; the forming of committees; propaganda in meeting-places and drawing-rooms, especially in the latter; the collection of funds; the erection of vast piles with much unnecessary display and without regard of the tendency of the locality on which this gigantic cavern of misery is foisted. We have reached a stage where humanitarian endeavour cannot be carried on any longer without nickel-plated and stained-wood accessories, and it has come to a pass when the duty to your neighbour must be duly performed in a palace of charity of granite or, preferably, marble. It now requires bodies, boards, and

miles of red tape to do a Christian act, and men's aches and women's heart sorrows are carefully registered in perfect card systems.

If you have a boy in the country ready to come to the city, be sure of his first landing-place. There are homes even in the cities, and many are open to honest boys. Ministers, chiefs of police, and newspaper men will help you in their selection. Do not throw your boy into the maelstrom, unless you want him to forswear his integrity and fight for the survival of the fittest. Then he will perhaps win out among the rogues and spend his after-years in building pumps and fountains to square himself with his conscience.

X

THE TALMUD MAN FROM WILNA

THERE was a wide margin of difference between the leaving and the coming of Meyer Rabinovitz. It could not have been otherwise. In Wilna, although the business had been lost, although the son had died just when great things were expected of him, and the wife had soon followed, wearied and worried into death by constant misfortune and persecution, he had still been the rabbi, and a shred of venerable respect had always been his share. And when it all became impossible, and when nothing except America, the promised land of the oppressed, seemed to hold out a future, even then they showed him honour until the very last moment, and escorted him to the train which was to carry him and Rebecca to their haven of new hopes.

At Ellis Island it was all different. There was a multitude of people, noise, pulling, and shouting; but in all that hubbub there was no one to bid him welcome. On the night before their release from the detention pen Meyer stood looking across the craft-stirred waves and felt that in the gigantic city,

topped then with mercifully mellowing haze, the world would have to shrink just to himself, and Becky.

"My Becky!"

At their landing there were jeers in plenty. The old man, bent with the weight of his lares and penates, and the little timid girl had a welcome dealt out to them then by the loafing hoodlums, ever ready to represent our country to those about to visit us. Meyer, escaped from a land of violence, shrank in amazement from the threatening fists and tried to protect Becky from insolence and rough usage. Yet, though his eyes were scared, his reason did not falter, and a strong spirit of stamina braved him to fight his battle at this, his last stand.

Without much fuss he knuckled to his fate and set about to make a living for himself and Becky. He had not come penniless. A few rubles remained still from the fund augmented by the friends in Wilna, and, after finding shelter in Chrystie Street, Meyer wasted no time in idling. Alas, here the cry is for young men, vigorous and trained, and old men with bowed shoulders and without trade are but little in demand. The small capital dwindled alarmingly, and, as a last resort, Meyer was forced to accept the well-meant advice of neighbours as poor as himself.

On a day as bitter as the shame within him,

Meyer Rabinovitz started out on his journey through the quarter inhabited by the well-to-do middle class. Day after day he made his trips, only to return with bag as empty as when he left his Becky in the morning. The trouble was that Meyer had not yet caught our germ of "push."

Then an unusual thing happened. A younger man in the same calling, who had frequently met old Rabinovitz, stopped him one day and gave him his first lesson in "goaheadativeness." It was an overpowering proof of the merciful tendency of business competition, and Meyer Rabinovitz was so convinced by it that he accepted the proffered advice.

After that Meyer shouted his "Cash paid!—Old clo'es!" almost loudly, almost so that one could hear it—and felt like apologising each time for having made so much noise on the public highway.

This sort of clothing business is not very profitable, even if some of the younger men, especially those "born here," by means of their aggressiveness and shrewdness, leave the streets after a few years to open, first, cellar shops, then, regular stores. Meyer realised all this; but as it was not his intention stay in the "old-clo'es" business, he was satisfied to eke out some sort of living at it for himself and Becky. He had a well-defined ambition and hoped to put it into effect some day.

Home, in Wilna, liberalism of thought had not

been tolerated, and accentuated orthodoxy had reigned supreme. Here all was liberalism, even verging on sheer radicalism. To combat this dogmatic reform movement with the age-weathered wisdom of the Talmud was Meyer's hope, and, to do this, he intended to found a small, but thorough, school, where sound doctrine and inspired teachings would fight the renegades, or lead them back; and, though the realisation seemed still far off, Meyer felt himself nearer to his goal with every sale effected. It was this hope, and its nursing, that smoothed somewhat the harshness of the old man's life.

In the meantime Rebecca Rabinovitz had utilised her opportunities and was quickly adapting herself to the process of "growing up with the country." To care for the two dingy rooms did not take much time, and many hours were left for "getting acquainted." Then the Educational Alliance opened a splendid institution for learning, and, prompted by fad or sincerity, the young people of the neighbourhood flocked there, sweeping Rebecca along.

Aided by inherited qualifications and the fund of early culture, Rebecca mastered her lessons without great effort and progressed with ease through the curriculum. At the Educational Alliance she made the acquaintance of young people whose parents were more prosperous than her own father, and was invited by them to their homes. These visits

and her increasing knowledge disturbed Rebecca's peace of mind. She became dissatisfied with her lot and longed for a share in that other world of which she had only occasional glimpses. Not that she attached any blame for her present unenviable condition to her father. She loved him with utmost devotion, admired him for his struggles against adversity, and resolved to become the medium for their mutual elevation.

To win a scholarship was an easy matter, and then there seemed to be no other obstacle to prevent her from preparing herself for her chosen career. While not absolutely free from selfish motives, her purpose, on the whole, was noble. She had learned quickly, school had been very pleasant to her, and it was but natural that she should wish to teach and make the trend of education as agreeable to others as it had been to her. Graduation and examination came in turn, and, after a reasonable wait, an assignment to teach in an uptown school followed.

This appointment brought the first change in their domestic arrangements. The school was at least four miles from Chrystie Street, and to travel back and forth twice daily would have been a foolish waste of time. During a very short discussion, in which Rebecca took and maintained the lead, it was decided that they should move farther uptown. Of this, flat-hunting was the natural result.

For the first time since his arrival in the country Meyer Rabinovitz rode on a street car. The incongruous appearance and conduct of the pair provoked many smiles. Rebecca, attired in her best, which was the neat average uniform of self-reliant young women as designed by an East Side modiste, swung herself on the car, followed more slowly by her father, in greenish-black Prince Albert coat and rusty silk tile. Meyer immediately tried to hide himself behind the passengers on the rear platform, but was not permitted to do so by his daughter.

"Come on, father."

"Must I go inside and sit down mit you?" he queried with imploring humbleness, before following his daughter into the interior of the car, stepping with apologetic mien and fearful of treading on people's toes.

Seated, the daughter again fell to perusing her list of advertised flats and Meyer was left to the tortures of self-consciousness. His legs and hands were very much in the way and sources of embarrassment. He crossed and folded them, but could not attain a comforting degree of ease. But worse than legs and hands were the eyes of the passengers on the opposite bench. Letting his glance travel stealthily from face to face, Meyer noted various expressions, from pity to contempt, and all directed at him. What, then, was the matter with him? Had his tie slipped again over his collar?

Was the coat, the fine coat, not brushed nice and clean? Was——

In his perplexity to evade the distressing observation, Meyer had stared right before him, and so came to understand. The facing reflection on the window on the other side of the car told the whole story. It was not so distinct as the picture in a looking-glass, but it was sufficiently outlined to bring home to Meyer the odd incongruity between his daughter, in her fine clothes, and himself, shabby in his greenish-black Prince Albert coat, new, many, many years ago, home in Wilna. During the remainder of the long ride Meyer tried to shrink within himself, to make himself so small that they would not see him, but only his beautiful daughter, Becky.

The flat selected was of diminutive size, but the many contrivances, the dumb-waiter, the electric bells, and others appliances which were understood by Rebecca and not by him, proved another incongruity between Meyer and his daughter.

The homeward trip was made in silence; Rebecca was mentally arranging her future life in the flat, Meyer was scheming for a flatless future. At the evening meal Meyer haltingly stated his ultimatum. He would not move up to the flat, but would stay in Chrystie Street. Rebecca would not hear of it. She loved her old father, and, if she was ambitious, he was included in all of her ambitions. But against

her remonstrances and persuasion Meyer advanced such plausible reasons that at last he had his way.

That Rebecca should live alone in the flat was out of the question, and a call in the next block perfected arrangements by which a friend, also a teacher, was to share the new apartment with her. One condition she imposed upon her father before moving away from Chrystie Street—he was to call often, daily, if possible.

For twenty-four hours Meyer was unable to suit himself to the new conditions. He was alone, absolutely alone, for the first time in his life. Rain spoiled his business for the day, and even this distraction was denied to him. With the coming of evening Meyer endeavoured to pull himself together. He would go up in a day or two and see Becky, and in the meantime he could delve into the wisdom of the Talmud.

The old leather-covered book was carefully taken from the place of honour on the mantel, and Meyer prepared himself to spend a profitable evening with the sages of his race. However—perhaps it was the poor light of the oil lamp, perhaps the room was too cold or too warm, or perhaps his eyesight was not so good as it should have been—at any rate, Meyer found reading impossible, and—why shouldn't one have a bit of fresh air on the clear evening of the long and rainy day, which had held one confined in stuffy quarters? That Meyer ex-

travagantly took a car and one that went far, far uptown was, most likely, an accident, a mere coincidence.

When within a few blocks of his daughter's new house Meyer simply outdid himself in playing the farce to an end. Wasn't it strange that he hadn't noticed where this car was going! How could this oversight have happened? He would call on Heaven to witness that he never intended to ride that far from Chrystie Street, and, surely, to trouble his daughter that night had been very far from his mind. Of course, so long as one was in the neighbourhood, it would be the height of impoliteness not to make a little call, maybe for a few minutes or so.

He could tell her house from the corner; it was, naturally, the finest house in the block. Bravely he ascended the three steps to the vestibule with its shining brass letter boxes and polished glass, bravely he lifted his arm to press the button, under which on a neat card his and her name, Rabinovitz, was displayed; then, again, he met his reflection in the glass of the door—and fled across the street.

No, he had no right to force himself into his daughter's new and pleasant life. A fine girl like Becky was sure to make friends everywhere, and they might do the same as the people in the car that day—laugh at her for having such a shabby father. But no one would know it if he were to come there

in the evenings and—and—just stand there a little while and look at the fine place where she lived, like a real lady.

Then came evenings of rest for the old, well-thumbed book, the companion of many profitable hours, and the dust gathered thickly on its covers, while Meyer went to "call" on his daughter. Night after night he made his humble pilgrimage to stand in the shadows, from where he stared with reverence, awe, and love at the windows of his daughter's abode.

Surely Meyer Rabinovitz did not look like a desperado, yet, even so, the policeman on the beat was obliged to take notice of him after seeing him there many times.

"Pleas, Mr. Policeman, pleas let me stand here a little in the evening. I do nothing, exkoose me. I'm nothing now, but in Wilna, ah—but you don't know where is Wilna. But my daughter, my Becky, she's a fine lady; she lives there upstairs. She's a teacher—and a fine lady."

Of course the officer did not interfere with the old man, and ere long Meyer was so used to his sentry duty that a place on the railing, against which he leaned throughout his vigils, was quite nicely polished from frequent contact with his elbow.

Had the daughter known of this friendly espionage she would not have permitted it. Rebecca was

not at all unmindful of her duty, and called on her father in Chrystie Street as often as time permitted. Her calls were always preceded by a postal card making the announcement. These cards, with their clear, legible writing, were Meyer's dearest possession and graced the cleanest spot on his grimy wall.

They were neighbourhood events, these calls of Rebecca. From tenement to tenement went the message: "Becky's down here to see her fa-ather." From the time of her arrival until the time of her leaving sentinels were in all doorways to report her movements to the waiting others. To be recognised by her, to have a word from her, put one into a special caste.

Meyer was not unaware of all this—and he liked it. At her departure he would keep her at the door of the tenement house as long as possible that all the neighbours could have one last look of pleasure or envy at his daughter. And how he liked to hear her voice! Why, it was like listening to a concert of the band in the park—and all that high-toned language! It was this same charming voice which informed Meyer one night that he was soon to have a son-in-law, a lawyer, smart and clever.

He could not deny it to himself that the announcement had given him something of a wrench. And then, was that the way they do it here, in this country? Is that all a daughter had to do, to go and tell her father that she was going to get mar-

ried, without asking him or depending on his counsel? In Wilna——

Oh, yes, in Wilna it was different; but this was America, and Meyer had ultimate faith in the good judgment of his Becky.

Rebecca had promised her father an early introduction to his future son-in-law; but Meyer hoped to have a private view of this prospective member of his family. He redoubled his vigilance, and watched his daughter's house with an increased interest. Every man entering or leaving the house was inspected and weighed by Meyer, but they were all found wanting and not good enough for such a lady "as Becky."

At last no mistake was possible, for Becky herself came downstairs with him, and Meyer quickly turned away when he saw the two heads of the lovers bend very near together.

"My, but ain't he the gentleman!" Meyer was ready to admit; yet—"and ain't my Becky the lady—and a teacher!"

Reflecting on the situation, Meyer found himself a prey to paradoxical feelings. He wanted and didn't want to meet the future son-in-law. Several appointments were made by Rebecca for the father and groom to meet, but Meyer always proved delinquent. On the other hand, since his first view of the son-in-law, Meyer never took his post opposite his daughter's house without being attired in the

greenish-black Prince Albert coat and the rusty tile. It was true the clothes and the hat were very old and shabby; but if he should meet the young man it would be in the evening, in the street, and the darkness would be merciful. Besides, his daughter had surely told how her father was a rabbi, a learned man from Wilna, and no one has ever seen a rabbi without a tall hat.

Rebecca's flat, except when measured by Meyer's standard, was in a neighbourhood by no means fashionable. The appearance of a carriage, even a livery turnout, never failed to draw a crowd of idlers to this speculative spectacle. On these occasions guesses would run wild as to who the opulent occupants of the vehicle were to be. Meyer, taking his post one evening, saw a carriage with its surrounding crowd in front of his daughter's house. He listened to the conjectures and guesses with smiling good-nature, feeling instinctively all the time that he knew the secret and that he could tell them who was destined to roll away in the fine coach. Why should he tell them? Maybe they were nice people and not loafers; but Becky, she was a lady—and a teacher—and these here, why, they would not understand. But one of the crowd asserted in all seriousness that the janitress—that big, fat Irish woman whom Meyer had seen so often—was going to drive away in the chariot, and that sundered the father's patience.

"Mister, exkoose me, pleas, but I know, I know who rides in that carriage," explained Meyer, smiling with gratification and pride. "My Becky, my daughter, who's a lady—and a teacher—she's going to have a fine ride mit the horses. She has a fine gentleman and she's a lady, oh, so fine."

Before Meyer had taken his fingers from his lips, having kissed their tips in tribute to the "fineness" of Becky, the crowd had shifted its point of focus to him.

"Hello, there, Sheeny!" "Hey, give us a little loose chewing out o' them whiskers o' you'rn." "Get onto his nib's hat!" and other exclamations told Meyer, who had spent the major part of his sojourn in America in the streets, that many moments of most decided strenuousness were before him. His immediate action was wrongly interpreted by the witty and humorous ruffians. Meyer could not rid himself of the belief that the carriage was waiting for Becky and her sweetheart. To let the rowdies abuse him there, in front of the house, would never do; would a fine gentleman, a lawyer clever and smart, marry a girl whose father he had seen kicked about in the street? So Meyer ran, and the crowd, seeing him run, ascribed his flight to fear.

But all the toughs in the city could not have driven Meyer from the street. It was the one chance to see his Becky in all her glory and—well,

let them beat him! His permission was not asked. His hat was flung into the middle of the street; his coat, that old Prince Albert, was torn into shrewds; his hair, his face, his beard suffered, but through it all Meyer, working with shrewdness and unsuspected strength, managed to keep his face in the direction of Becky's house.

He had been right; the carriage was for Becky and the son-in-law. Just as Meyer almost despaired, the two, his two children, had come down the steps, had entered the carriage and driven away to where it was gay and bright, where all the people went to theatres and ate in restaurants with white damask on the tables, and where Becky was sure to be the finest among all the fine ladies.

As the carriage turned the corner and the proud vision vanished, Meyer gave up his little resistance, not even deigning to cry for help. But that is not sport, without resistance there cannot be sport, and the brave citizens of the Commonwealth, having with parting kick and cuff sent Meyer into compassionate oblivion, left for their homes, the birthplaces of their citizenship, but poorly satisfied with their harmless frolic of the evening.

The friendly policeman helped Meyer to his feet when consciousness returned and wanted him to go to the hospital. No, Meyer insisted on going home. In his present state of general dilapidation to ride home on a car was out of the question. The bones

ached and the muscles were sore; but even so Meyer reached Chrystie Street in the course of several hours' tramp. He was glad of the darkness which masked his bloody hideousness and covered his entrance to the tenement. Once in the little room it all did not matter very much.

The looking-glass over the dresser showed the damages, the bleeding eyes, the swollen nose, and the torn cheeks; the coat, the Prince Albert, and the hat, both bought in Wilna, long, long ago, when Meyer Rabinovitz was not beaten, but was treated with fine respect, were ruined and battered, and——

But what was the use? From its place of honour came the long-neglected book, and Meyer turned to its pages for the solace of wisdom. He was not given to much smiling, and to-night in particular there seemed to be no good reason for hilarity, yet, before turning the next page, he took the glasses from his nose, and, smiling, murmured to himself: "Meyer, you're a fool! This is all different. This is a new world. This is for Becky, who's a lady—and a teacher. What do you want, Meyer? Ain't you had yours home, in Wilna? Do you want to be everything every time? Go ahead and read your book. You're a fool, Meyer, believe me, you're a fool!"

And Meyer read way into the night.

XI

THE BOWERY MISSION

IT is a sad and pathetic condition when a street or locality owes its fame to its viciousness. For many years the Bowery was known as one of the most wicked, if not the most wicked, street in the world. There was ample justification for this notoriety, as I, from over thirty years on the Bowery, can testify. Externally there is no resemblance between the Bowery of to-day and the Bowery of about ten years ago. In the olden days not a block was without its concert hall—merely another name for brothel—its dive, its gambling hell, and its bilking house. There was no pretence about them. They were openly conducted, advertising themselves by garish posters or loud-mouthed barkers. Then, the Bowery—no matter how the rest of the town fared—was always wide open. To day flagrant vice has departed from the Bowery. Only one concert hall remains, and the other nefarious occupations are conducted very much on the quiet, and not with very great profit.

During the day the Bowery appears as many other streets in the city. There are banks, office

buildings, and a wealth of stores, all attracting thousands of transients. The day on the Bowery is busy and ultra-respectable. At night quiet reigns supreme. Often have I been asked by visitors in sheer amazement: "And is this the Bowery, the wicked, tough Bowery?" To which I had to answer in the affirmative.

While in former years it was not advisable to take long walks on the Bowery, especially if one bore the outward marks of prosperity, one may now walk from Cooper Union to Brooklyn Bridge without running even the slightest risk.

Still there is to-day as much need of rescue work on the Bowery as when the old Bowery Mission was first started.

The Bowery Mission first opened its doors on November 7, 1879. The Rev. A. G. Ruliffson and his wife wanted to open a mission on the east side of the town. It was their intention to locate in the most wicked spot. That was easily found. Before beginning work they wisely consulted an authority on slum rescue work, Jerry McAuley, then leader of the Water Street Mission. He was enthusiastic about the project.

"If I could be the means, under God, of establishing a mission on the Bowery, that is all I would ask on earth."

His wish was destined to be gratified.

After many talks and consultations with Jerry

McAuley, Rev. A. G. Ruliffson and wife saw their way clear and began the work at 14 Bowery.

Having been born practically "just around the corner" from that address, and having been a participant in most of the events which went to give that locality its unsavoury reputation, I can bear personal testimony that a tougher, more wicked territory could not have been found at that time in New York.

In that one block, Chatham Square to Bayard Street, were eight concert halls; five gambling houses; four fake museum—blinds for lottery schemes or indecent exhibitions; seven saloons, not one of them conducted legitimately; nine "hotels" of the rankest sort; five lodging houses, ranging in price from twenty-five to seven cents; while in the adjoining block, in Bayard Street, every house —without exception—was a den of ill-repute. In addition it must be mentioned that the Whyo gang, the Cherry Hill gang, and the Five Points gang had their headquarters there, and sometimes worked in concert to the discomfort of peaceful citizens, and, again, fought their battles in pitched array to the bodily injury of inoffensive non-participants.

The locality was so well liked by the crooked and vicious element that space was at a premium, and that even the cellars were utilised as headquarters of pernicious activity. Two basements—under 15 and 17 Bowery—were the central station of Barney ·

McGuire, the notorious Sawdust King, who made an immense fortune from his many crops of "green goods," fertilised by the gullibility of greedy yet *honest* fools. Opium dens were operated in a number of other basements.

Human life rated very cheaply in that region, and scarcely a building in that block has not sent its share to Potter's Field.

And there, certainly a promising field, Mr. and Mrs. Ruliffson, in a small room, economically furnished, began the work which has prospered so mightily. They were alone at first, but such courage as theirs could not long remain unnoticed, and gradually they gathered about them a small band of Christian friends, who helped with effort, money, and prayer. And these pioneers of righteousness worked so energetically in this wilderness of sin that, ere long, larger quarters became necessary. These were obtained and amply fitted up through the generosity of Mr. Tibbals, a Broadway merchant. Moved to 36 Bowery, the rescue station became officially known as "The Bowery Mission and Young Men's Home." Its supporters, workers, and converts, however, preferred to call it "A Light in a Dark Place."

In its new home the mission grew extensively and increased its sphere so that a superintendent, Mr. J. Ward Childs, was appointed. For years the small band of inspired men and women laboured

here until the influence of the Bowery Mission began to reach into the far corners of the earth. Their means were never abundant, yet thousands were fed and clothed, and—the greatest glory—thousands were saved from a life of destruction and rehabilitated to a Christian life.

The best proof of the far-reaching influence of the mission is given in the incident which resulted in bringing the Bowery Mission under its present management.

In the early days of the mission an English sailor, on shore to see the sights of the Bowery, and to sample its poisonous concoctions, hearing the singing in the rescue hall, took it for a dive and staggered in. He became another miracle wrought by the spirit which dwelt in that mission. Before the service was over he was a sober and changed man. Work on shore was offered to him, but knowing the temptations besetting seafaring men, he determined to continue his sailor's career and to do missionary work among his colleagues. Wherever he sailed, east, west, or south, he professed his Christianity and preached the Gospel in his plain, unassuming way. Ultimately his efforts were recognised, and he was put in charge of a mission at Smyrna, in Asia Minor, on the site of one of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation.

There, John Parkinson, true to the teachings received by him at the Bowery Mission, laboured

willingly for the saving of souls and the spreading of the Word. Among his converts was a young Armenian who desired to preach the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Parkinson knew of no better plan to help the young man than to refer him to his own Alma Mater, the Bowery Mission, and sent him with a letter of introduction to the superintendent. In New York the young Armenian was entered at the Union Theological Seminary, where he graduated with the highest honours. His ability and earnestness were so evident that a millionaire provided the funds for founding the Asia Minor Apostolic Institute at Tarsus, and the devoted and brilliant young man, then the Rev. H. S. Jenanyan, was placed at its head. Through the institute many churches have been established in the Turkish Empire, but Mr. Jenanyan to this day declares himself indebted for everything to the Bowery Mission.

But not until a party of New York visitors called at his mission in Smyrna did Parkinson have the chance to repay his debt to the Bowery Mission.

Returning from a visit to Palestine, the Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage, the late editor, and Dr. Louis Klopsch, the proprietor of *The Christian Herald*, stopped at Smyrna. Attending a meeting at the Seaman's Mission they were deeply interested by the testimony of the leader, who told the congregation how eight years ago, a poor, drunken sailor, he had been converted in the Bowery Mission. The

two New York visitors were deeply impressed by the testimony of the saved man, and when Dr. Klopsch on his home-coming found that the Bowery Mission, owing to the death of its leader and the commercial depression that prevailed at the time, was struggling for existence, his sympathy was aroused. Convincing himself further of the splendid usefulness of the mission, Dr. Klopsch removed its immediate financial disabilities, and, to put it on a sound basis, had it incorporated.

The list of incorporators reads like a roll of honour, each name standing for a maker for betterment:

Rev. John Hall, D. D., Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D., Mrs. Sarah J. Bird, Rev. David James Burrell, D. D., Rev. C. H. Mead, D. D., Rev. Josiah Strong, D. D., Mrs. Amelia E. Barr, Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D. D., Henry Edwards Rowland, Esq., B. Fay Mills, Rev. A. C. Dixon, D. D., Rev. Stephen Merritt, Rev. R. S. McArthur, D. D., Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D. D., Rev. James M. King, D. D.; Louis Klopsch, president; B. J. Fernie, vice president; G. H. Sandison, secretary; *The Christian Herald,* treasurer.

Special mentioning must be made of one of the incorporators, Mrs. Sarah J. Bird. Long before she became associated with the Bowery Mission Mrs. Bird was an active worker in Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. After

the death of her husband, a wealthy merchant, Mrs. Bird dedicated all her time and means to evangelistic work among the outcast men of the slums. Single-handed, and not assisted by a staff of trained helpers, without the backing of a church or religious institution, she went ahead aggressively. In a small room in Madison Street, a stone's throw from the Bowery, she met about four times a week the motliest crowd that ever listened to the blessed Word. And there, like in a garden of weeds, among drunkards, petty thieves, tramps, and other outcasts, this refined, cultured, devoted lady struggled on to reawaken deadened and shrivelled manhood with the messages of eternal love.

With the incorporation of the Bowery Mission Mrs. Bird became actively engaged in this larger field. For over twelve years she has held meetings at the Bowery Mission on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings. At these meetings she "treats" the "boys" to coffee and sandwiches. She is personally known to thousands of men who are or were at some time in the past homeless. She is always ready to the limit of her means to help deserving cases, and the epic of her work is in the name, given her by her friends, "The Mother of the Bowery."

The life of this godly woman is so devoted to the cause that she has given up her beautiful residence in Montclair and lives at present at the Gospel

"TREATS THE BOYS TO COFFEE AND SANDWICHES"

Settlement in Clinton Street, of which she is the founder.

There is still hope, much hope, for the ultimate redemption of Bowery outcasts so long as we have such women as Mrs. Bird in the work.

With the assumption of the management of the Bowery Mission by Dr. Louis Klopsch and his fellow-incorporators, the place was moved to 105 Bowery, where the scope of work was largely increased.

Sleeping accommodations for two hundred men were provided; a spacious restaurant was opened in the basement, feeding over two thousand men daily, and giving them a square meal for the price of a glass of vile liquor, and an enlarged meeting-room was fittingly decorated. The restaurant feature of the mission was so appreciated that two more eating places were established at 55 and 262 Bowery. Another outgrowth of the new and more enterprising spirit prevailing now was a free dispensary, which was an inestimable boon to the many broken-down and ailing wrecks of the neighbourhood.

Here the Bowery Mission was just beginning to find its true gait, when it met with a sad interruption in the fire which destroyed the building in the spring of 1898. It was a terrible blow, but was bravely met by the victims and their friends, the workers of the mission. Many lost every bit of clothing and everything else possessed by them,

but were quickly taken to the Annex at 55 Bowery, where clothing and food was given to all sufferers.

With scarcely any delay the work of the mission was continued at the Annex, 55 Bowery, which eventually became the central point of all the different movements carried on by the Bowery Mission. It is a remarkable coincidence that at 55 Bowery, the present location, one of the most notorious dives of the city was once conducted by the equally notorious Gombossy.

It will be conceded that the Bowery Mission in its present abode comes very near being the ideal mission. The lofty, well ventilated hall has just enough of churchly appearance to impress the heterogeneous congregation with its dignity. The splendid organ, besides providing real music, serves also ornamental purposes by its magnificent proportions and elaborate decorations. The panels of the walls are inscribed with appropriate quotations from the Bible, and everything possible is done to make attendance at the services a thing of pleasure and edification to the men.

Five years ago the Bowery Mission was placed in charge of Mr. J. G. Hallimond, who has spent many years in evangelistic work. Having been deeply interested as lay worker in the famous West London Mission conducted by the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Mr. Hallimond came to this country as secretary to Ballington Booth, and on the organ-

isation of the Volunteers of America became the national secretary of the movement. Several new features were inaugurate by Mr. Hallimond in addition to the evangelistic work previously conducted by the Bowery Mission. A Young Men's Home was started to shelter the men who gave convincing proof of their desire to lead decent lives. To facilitate the efforts of the converts to find work an employment agency was established, which finds positions for over a thousand men annually. Also a tract of land was bought on Long Island, to which men, accustomed to such labour, were sent to clear and cultivate it. Further, in conjunction with *The Christian Herald,* the Bowery Mission inspired the summer home for children at Nyack-on-the-Hudson, where several thousands of children, gathered from the densest and most unhealthful districts in the metropolis, spend blessed vacations of about two weeks' duration during the sultry months of the summer.

Another institution related to the Bowery Mission and *The Christian Herald* is the Bethesda Home in Brooklyn, where girls who have met with misfortune, or who have made a misstep, can find shelter and counsel to equip themselves to begin life anew again.

The Bowery Mission itself is one of the few missions that have a direct and immediate influence on the neighbourhood of its location. Dr.

Louis Klopsch and Mr. Hallimond are watchful of the critical periods which frequently disturb the even tenor of the breadwinners' lives. In the time of strikes or lockouts emissaries from the Bowery Mission are making careful canvass in the near-by tenements to report and relieve any cases of need. There have been times when hundreds of families have been fed for days and weeks at a time.

That the men of the Bowery are always remembered at holidays goes without saying. Are not Mrs. Bird and Mr. Hallimond right on the spot? But even at other times—and no matter whether day or night—the homeless one, the hungry man, is never sent away from the hospitable doors. And it makes no difference whether the applicant is a convert or not. To the large-hearted men and women of the Bowery Mission it is enough justification to be in want.

It is now twenty-five years since the Bowery Mission was opened. At the anniversary which was recently celebrated the work of the mission was praised in most eulogistic terms by the eminent speakers present to honour the occasion. Every word said then was deserved, and yet it was palpably inadequate. The good men present thought that because the external appearance of the locality had changed for the better—and largely owing to the influence of the mission—that the lion's share of the the task had been done, and that nothing

remained but the singing of inspired pæans of praise and thanksgiving.

If you, during a visit to the Bowery, should be impressed by its business-like and respectable appearance, let Mr. Hallimond and me tell you—and we know—that never was the need of a mission on the Bowery greater than at the present. True, most of the concert halls, gambling houses, and crooked joints have gone, but in their stead have come the lodging houses, harbouring nightly over fifty thousand men, who would be forgotten, left to their reeking fate, were it not for the Bowery Mission.

There are so many erroneous conceptions abroad that I will try to describe the Bowery population in a few words. First of all, whenever you are ready to pity or condemn the Bowery "has-been," do not forget that he stands much closer to you than to the people of the slums. Less than two per cent. of the men of the lodging houses were born in the metropolis or in cities exceeding fifty thousand in population. Add to this that less than seven per cent. were born under conditions which might be characterised as conditions of poverty, and you will not be far from agreeing with me and those who know the complexion of the lodging-house population that the Bowery, always condemned and defamed, is nevertheless the last resort and the dumping-ground of all the black sheep and

ne'er-do-wells in the country, born and reared in good, decent families. Were the men who inhabit the lodging houses part and parcel of the neighbourhood they would not awaken half the sympathy these scions of better social shifts receive, because the former would live according to a routine—most of them work—and would not become so fascinated with the hideous Bohemianism of the Underworld.

And because at intervals some of these black sheep can be saved from utter destruction it is that the Bowery Mission is so indefatigable in trying to save them from their fate. As a peculiar sidelight on the attitude of Christian people I cannot refrain from mentioning here, that until about a year ago the Bowery Mission was the only means of rescue on this thoroughfare of misery and foolishness, on which over fifty thousand men eke out their existence.

I have been very close to the rescue work in this city for many years, and have made careful observations, and have come to the conclusion that, with the exception of the Jerry McAuley Mission in Water Street, conducted by Mr. S. H. Hadley,* no other mission fills its place as well as the Bowery Mission. To me it seems like a profanation of divine service to combine the worship of God with the distribution of bed or meal tickets. This habit is very much in vogue in most missions, but for-

**Mr. Hadley died February 9, 1906.*

tunately is not observed in the Bowery Mission. Help is given, freely and amply, but at its proper time. In the evening when the wrecks of the Bowery are persuaded by song or personal appeal to come into the mission they hear the Word or beautiful singing, but just that and nothing else can be gotten at that time.

In spite of this rule the attendances are remarkably large, proving thereby that the Word alone can attract sinners, without bribes or material benefit. The platform at the Bowery Mission is not given to every theological freak or fanatic. Mr. Hallimond knows the invited speakers, and knows what they intend to speak about. Whenever Mr. Hallimond speaks himself he does not treat the men to an extemporaneous harangue on the most convenient text, but prepares his address as carefully, makes his notes as surely, as if he were to speak to a most fashionable congregation. And this intelligent treatment is appreciated by the men. Many, without becoming publicly converted, attend regularly, and little details of improvement in their personal attire—such as collars and cuffs, polished boots and clean-shaven faces—are gradually noticed.

Every Tuesday evening a concert is given. We all have a pretty fair idea what these religious entertainments and concerts resemble, at least we think we have. These Bowery Mission concerts

are a trifle different from other religious concerts. They are more human, more perfect, more intelligent, and therefore more successful. Instead of having Sister Mary trying to dislocate her neck in squeezing the high "C" from her alabaster throat, and instead of having Master Johnny implore the woodman to spare that tree-ee-ee, we have sane music, produced by celebrated artists. Among the artists who are always willing to contribute their talents to making one evening cheerful to the Bowery "has-been" are such familiar names as Mrs. Rollie Borden Low, Sally Frothingham Akers, Evelyn H. Varno, Gwilym Miles, Hans Kronold, Theodore Bjorksten, and many others.

Everything possible to take the men away from their evil associates and discouraging reflections is done at the Bowery Mission. To make them inquire after the truth a rather promising feature has recently been introduced. One evening in the week is set aside as question evening. Professor O'Hanlon is the source of knowledge and is kept exceedingly busy. The calibre of the men is best seen in their questions. One asked: "Would God expect me to love my enemy who has wronged me, who has been forgiven by me, but who still keeps on wronging me?" Another asks: "Is there any hope beyond the grave for any wrong-doer?" The following question was sent to the platform on Players' Club stationery: "Is there predestination,

and can we avoid or anticipate it?" "What is the unpardonable sin?" "Is not God too good to damn anybody?" "Is smoking a sin?" and this one, disclosing a harrowing domestic tragedy: "It says, obey thy father and thy mother. Is it the duty of a child to obey a father and mother who are never seen otherwise than drunk, and who have neglected and abused their offspring?"

Is there not in these questions an index given to the feeling produced in the men by the conscientious work of the Bowery Mission? A state of mind is created within them which no ranting sermon of theological harlequin could ever create. They are made to think about themselves, about the causes of their downfall, and about the means of getting up again.

To give a definite idea of the work accomplished during a year, I give below a table of statistics from an annual report:

Gospel meetings held	437
Aggregate attendance	80,230
Professed conversions	5,437
Men and boys sheltered in lodging house	40,943
Meals served in restaurant	628,673
Patients treated in free dispensary	2,300
Employment found for	1,200
Kindergarten attendance (3 months)	770
Attendance at Mrs. Bird's women's meetings	2,300
Professed conversions at same	250
Free meals	50,850

This is the showing of a single season, but what shall be said of the twenty-five years of consecrated, unceasing labour on these lines—years of effort for soul and body reclamation?

The Bowery Mission occupies a place all its own among the evangelistic and rescue institutions of the city. It is the church of sinners. The "has-been" is an emotional creature, a creature of moods and reflections. During his reflections it happens quite often that the man of the Bowery has the "church fever" come over him. He cannot account for it. Perhaps he does not want to give in to it, but it has him, and his thoughts run to parson, priest, choir, and organ.

There are reasons why his appearance at one of the "regular" churches would not bring out the hearty welcome which Christians are always supposed to be ready to give. A few adventurous spirits of the Bowery have tried the experiment, but vow they will never do so again. Therefore, they all, no matter of what creed or colour, find their way to our church of sinners and declare it "all right."

The chief aim of the Bowery Mission is spiritual. The purpose is to plant the seed in receptive hearts and let it work its way out. As Mr. Hallimond, the superintendent, puts it, "There is a promise; it is the promise of a faithful, loving, just, and all-powerful God. He who accepts this promise—ac-

cepts it unconditionally—can dispense with depending on men. He has the best stay and support." To this Mr. Hallimond added: "Bed tickets are not a part of our service."

The motto of the Bowery Mission is, "Always open, and open to all," and the consequence is that the superintendent and his assistants are never permitted to be lonesome.

During the winter months, from about December until April, over a thousand men pile into the Bowery Mission nightly, 1 A. M., for a "promenade breakfast" of coffee and rolls. I have stood there often and have seen that human avalanche throw itself down those stairs and I felt glad of the cheer that was offered to these unfortunate fellows, but felt still better at the thoughtfulness which had inspired this "promenade breakfast"—and at this hour. Have you ever walked the streets for a whole night, perhaps for two or more nights in succession, with the winds whistling about you, the policeman cursing you, and nothing for company excepting those grey thoughts of "what might have been"? If you haven't had this experience, try it and you will find that at about one or two in the morning, just when your friends are turning over to take another hold on sleep, something like a steaming hot cup of coffee would be easily worth a king's ransom. And just because that sort of feeling creeps over one in the empty

street at that hour of the morning, just because of that, Dr. Louis Klopsch, Mr. Hallimond, and the other splendid men and women in the work have arranged to give this cup of coffee at that very special hour. Do you know what this arrangement shows, irrespective of its charity and sympathy? It shows that these workers of the Bowery Mission understand the situation, and that the lives of the poor " has-beens " are very near to them, and they, therefore, accomplish glorious work.

I have heard this promenade breakfast criticised on social and economical grounds, and it all sounded very intelligent and scientific—but, somehow, it was unconvincing. With the thermometer below zero, and the man, but poorly clad, banished to the street for all night, it is worth while to take the risk of offending sociology by offering the warming cup of coffee to the poor, famished creature.

What more can I say? Whatever sound faith, true religion, and inspired prayer can do is done at the Bowery Mission. It is a glorious object lesson, this old church of sinners, showing that faith and common sense can well travel along together. The sanity of the rescue work and the rescue workers is evident everywhere in the methods and the results. There is no finer sight than to look down from the platform of the Bowery Mission and note the many clean-bodied and clean-minded men who were rescued from the sea of human

wreckage among which they still sit, dotting it here and there, like lighthouses to which their former brethren should swim to be saved. Converts of the old Bowery Mission have gone forth from there to all the corners of the world, but few, very few, forget their rebirthing place.

Of course I do not expect you to be as enthusiastic about the Bowery Mission as I am, because most likely you have never been inside of it, but—and you can depend on it—Mrs. Sarah Bird, Dr. Louis Klopsch, Mr. Hallimond, and even myself are not the kind of people to waste our lives or our efforts on something worthless. There is much work to be done, and the work at the Bowery Mission is not the least important. If you do want to know more about the mission, or want to help, write to anyone whose name has been mentioned in this account, and you will have prompt reply. The Bowery Mission needs sinners, money, clothes, and a lot of other things—but above all it needs friends, millions of them—and their prayers.

XII

FROM THE SINNERS' BENCHES

"Rescue the perishing, care for the dying;
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave."

I BELIEVE there are very few among us who have not heard and do not love this hymn, written by Fanny J. Crosby, our grand poet laureate of Gospel song, and W. H. Doane. And let us hope that, in spite of its refined sweetness, both words and melody have found within us the permanent echo, which is generally only produced by the thundering avalanches of harmony.

It is a good and blessed hymn for everybody, but especially for the men and women who are the heralds of the message "Come unto Me." To those who have never heard it or have forgotten it, that hymn could almost be called the text-book of rescue work.

I am very glad to have this opportunity of writing about what I consider the shortcomings in our present rescue-work methods. Elsewhere I have written about work among the fallen, and have been right lustily "roasted and broiled" on the spit of criticism. I am inclined to believe that most of the letters which reached me were inspired by a misunderstanding of my position in the matter.

When the day comes that you can step up to me and say: "I can prove that you have lied when you wrote this," and do prove it, I shall break my pen into atoms, shall be willing to have my lying hand hewn from its wrist, and shall do your bidding in my atonement.

I am not yet so long removed from the days of my iniquity that I have lost the right to call myself an honorary member of that Great and Unfortunate Order of the Wicked, and I, as their representative, will present our side of the case, that you may either prove us wrong, or else help us to that which we desire.

Put yourself in the place of one who knows naught of religion. He knows that there is such a thing as religion, because he sees churches and has heard of clergymen; but he knows no more about their nature and work than that they are for betterment, and esteemed by more righteous people than himself.

The time comes when that fateful whisper also reaches his ear, and he hears "Come, come unto Me."

He heeds the message, and, feeling that he would not fit into the picture as presented in the church edifice, he seeks the humbler proxy, the rescue mission, to make it the scene of his compact with the Master.

Of course the routine of the service will not halt

for him, and, until the time comes when he can kneel and send his plea up to the throne, he listens to the words and songs. The discourse surprises him. It so happens that the speaker is a so-called undenominational radical, one who cannot speak without disparaging regular churches and clergymen. He criticises the tone and text of sermons; the church methods; their supposed aloofness; yes, even their coldness toward the unfortunate sinner. He speaks as if an inimical spirit existed between church and rescue mission work.

Some time ago I heard a man say this from the platform: "Thank God for these missions! [Amen to that!] I'm a Christian, and will stay one if all the churches vanish and only these rescue missions are left. I do not go to church on Sunday; I come to a mission where I can hear the Word plainly and simply, and not as they preach it in the pulpits."

I ask you in all fairness, is that the sort of talk to give to men and women who only know of the existence of religion by the steeples of its temples? Is it then a hindrance to one's salvation to have the message presented with the sweetness of a Henry Ward Beecher, or in the heart-burning words of a DeWitt Talmage?

Here is a duty to be performed by leaders and superintendents of missions: Be censors of what shall be said from your platforms. You are pledged

to bring your sinners nearer to Him, right to His very feet, and should not permit to have them puzzled and thrown into doubt by well-intended, perhaps well-founded, discussions of existing conditions.

Would you consider it a convalescing remedy to picture the horrors of delirium tremens to the drunkard just released from the alcoholic ward in Bellevue? Would you not rather strengthen his unnerved mind and will by cheerful geniality and caring kindness? The man was sick, a victim of the most dreadful of diseases.

Why then should you throw the doubting and disbelieving sinner, right at the very threshold, into a sea of doubt and partisanship? Tell him rather the truth, which is, that, were it not for the churches, and the clergymen and congregations worshipping in them, we would have fewer missions, and they would be more hampered in their work.

Let us concede, for the sake of argument, that the churches are not sufficiently aggressive in rescue work. Is there not a parallel to be found in college and university settlement work? The Alma Mater is not directly active, but is responsible for the impulse, the doctrine, the theory, which finds an outlet in most practical and intelligent work. Is not that what the church does, and perhaps in a larger, broader, more embracing way? Is not the

church the stimulus which creates in us a love for our fellow-men, and the desire to help those less blessed than ourselves? And as to the clergymen, why, one has only to spend a day with a city pastor to learn what a busy life his is. Why sneer at the pastors of our fashionable churches? Would you wish the "fashionables" to be without spiritual guidance, or do you not think, with a spreading public opinion, that they need the prop of religion more than the less fashionable? I am not rich, but I think that riches honestly earned may be the means of saving many from breaking hearts, and averting bitter regrets and bitterer repentance.

That many missions owe their very existence and support to a maternal church seems to be only too often forgotten. I have sat on the benches facing the platform, and I know that we, the unsaved, were not especially edified by hearing slighting allusions to churches and ministers.

The most interesting service ever witnessed by me in a rescue mission was one I attended at my very start in the sunny life. The speaker's earnestness was evident, and was enhanced by his thorough knowledge of the Bible. He was as sure of his Biblical personages and data as the professor of history is sure of his kings and legendary battles. There was a convincing definiteness in his discourse which made us all sit up and listen, until we forgot

that we were listening with suddenly awakened faith, to events and miracles at which we had often laughed in our superior unbelief. Then came the lesson from it, and from that the deduction that the God of then was the God of to-day, ready to forgive and to receive the sinner of this moment, as He had been ready to forgive the blood-stained warrior of a score of centuries ago. It brought it to our callous, sneering, filthy hearts that we had listened to the Gospel of an all-forgiving love, and each man felt that on that mighty bosom a place for his weary head was waiting for him.

Yes, that man could speak, and speak persuadingly. And that is what is needed on rescue platforms. But on how many can it be found?

No one among us, who has cleft a place for himself or herself among the productive workers of the day, has done so without some self-training. The fireman who risks his life in saving yours must undergo the drill of weary months before considered efficient for his duty. If you are in the work of saving men's lives from a worse fate than flames, should you not train yourself also?

Faith, yes, you must have that, and an abundance of it; but your results will be greater if you add efficacy to faith. And it can be had easily.

A mission superintendent told me that his salary was very small and his work very trying. But no matter how small the salary, books are very cheap

and make the work easier. At times, when I step down from the speaker's place at churches or other assemblages, I feel ashamed of myself for having left so much unsaid and for having said the thing so feebly. Were I trained for speaking, these shortcomings would be remedied or at least improved. If the manner of speaking were unimportant, seminaries and training schools would not give it its important place in the currriculum. Text-books of rhetoric are very cheap, and you owe it to yourself to speak the Message to the fallen as intelligently as you can learn it to speak. Among the crowd before you sit many men, ragged and demoralised, but educated and intellectually equipped, and it lies with you to incite their respect, which will be followed by conviction.

All this does not imply that we of the sinners' benches expect a display of oratorical fireworks. We do not! We expect simplicity, the simpler the better, but we ought to have distinct utterance, a rational succession of facts and convincing peroration. There is a lot of shallow scepticism, bred in lodging-house rooms or gin-mills, in the cobwebbed minds before you, and their life has narrowed down to such a pessimistic level that nothing but facts will convince them. And in the giving of facts you should have no trouble, for have you not the blessed Chronicle of His works before you?

The tenor of the testimony part lies with the

leader of the meeting. As a whole, all testimonies are helpful, but converts intuitively will take their cue from the leader as to whether having the personal note prevail or to submerge it, and sound His glorious harmony instead. The right kind of a testimony, rightly given, is of untold value. You can hear them in all meetings, and I never listen to one without shaking the convert's hand and telling him that I feel honoured to know a true man.

A part of the service, managed with varying degrees of effectiveness in the different missions, is the singing of the hymns. I do not speak of the special song services, but of the singing at the regular meetings.

Modern science has proven that music is a mighty agent in swaying our temperamental emotions. Why, then, do we not make a greater effort to have the Gospel songs put us into a receptive mood?"

Live but for a day the life of an outcast, apparently buffeted by men and fate alike, and you will understand the mellowness which a sweet melody can bring to that quivering heart.

Some time ago I sat in the midnight mission in Doyer Street. A wise leader, noticing the effect produced by his plain, straightforward talk, asked a lady to sing a solo, while he went among the men to make a canvass of their consciences for the sake of their souls.

"Where is My Wandering Boy To-night?" was

the lady's choice, and it was sung with no more striving for artificial embellishment than she would have employed at her piano in her own home. But the strains of the simple melody floated through space, stopping just long enough at the heart of every man to knock at the door of his treasure vault of memories, and not a move, barely a breath, disturbed the singer for a long time, until—a draught may have caused it—a chorus of sniffing and suspicious coughing made itself heard, while many noses were blown with a too emphatic fervour. Most heads hung low; but on the faces I could see that the traces of sin, lust, and degradation were, for the time, veiled by a reflection of the thoughts within. Decades and scores of years were lived over again in those few minutes, and nearer to his God felt every being in that room.

"Oh, I can stand this no longer!"

The wail came from a youth, who rose from among his fellows and staggered to the door. He did not get beyond it. I need not tell you the story he told me. A variation of that discordant theme, moaned and groaned by the many along the highway of the wicked. He is home now; the splendid son of a splendid mother and a worker among the weeds. Had it not been for that song we would have never met, which I would have regretted, for he is a good man, who had turned the wrong corner and had landed in a dirty alley.

All this is an old story. That blessed old tune is responsible for having steered many wandering boys home again, and it is a good proof of my assertion that our hymns could be greater factors in the work. If the great multitude can memorise the ever-increasing "popular songs of the day," and their inane rhymes, with marvellous exactitude, why can we not do better with our beautiful hymns?

I do not claim to be a critic of poetic effusions, but the words of most of our hymns are very full of meaning in their unpretentious metres, to my humble mind.

"Tell me the old, old story,
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love.
Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child,
For I am weak and weary,
And helpless and defiled."

Yes, we all can sing it, but, just for a test, how many of us can recite it? And is it not worth memorising? Sing that hymn, reading every word of it, and it will come fuller from your throat.

I do not wish to force my taste and judgment upon you, but I would like to submit to you whether a hymn with the words of the following should not be sung as if we meant it:

"Brightly beams our Father's mercy
From his lighthouse evermore,
But to us He gives the keeping
Of the lights along the shore.
Let the lower lights be burning,
Send a gleam across the wave;
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
You may rescue, you may save."

As I see it, there is divinely inspired poetry in that verse. Is it not true, that imagery of the writer? Is not "this lighthouse brightly beaming," and have we not the "keeping of the lights along the shore"?

Take any hymn-book, glance through it, and you will be surprised at the nobleness and purity of the verses. Is it, then, just to the men and women who have put their best inspirations into rhyme, to sing their words without a true appreciation of their meaning? Perhaps I am wrong in assuming all this, and to convince myself, I shall ask the very next professing Christian I meet to recite the Doxology to me. Let me suggest to you to do likewise, and you may find a few surprises awaiting you.

So, taking the merit of the hymns as an accepted fact, you should not undervalue their effect on a crowd of sinners. I know that the song part of the services is the real magnet for many of the men. Their lives are stripped bare of everything refining and beautiful, and we all know that in every heart a little corner is reserved for the beautiful things

of life. Some like pictures, or stately buildings, or flowers, or even beautiful animals, and a great majority likes music.

I have sat among crowds of weary, disheartened men, but with the intonation of that grand battle hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers," there came a straightening of backbones and a braver flicker into bleary eyes.

Let me ask you, in the name of my brethren of the highway of the foolish and wicked, to sing your hymns as you have never sung them before, and to make every word in them tell. You will do both, give pleasure and prepare the soil.

Looking back at my "whence," I can understand the hardness of the work among the unfortunates. It is disheartening labour to drill through the accumulated layers of callousness, so disheartening that the callousness sometimes, although rarely, becomes infectious. But look at the reward! Not only the one above, but the one right here! To see a smile creep over a wan little face at your gift of something bright, to note your words finding a grasp in some besodden mind, to lead the hymn with a responsive enthusiasm, ah, it is great reward. And it all can be made the means to

"Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save."

XIII

THE VOLUNTEER ORGANIST

(An Incident from the Bowery Mission.)

(Author's Note.—It is generally believed that the principal character of the following experience was the original of the once so famous popular song, "The Volunteer Organist.")

IT is a far cry from Silesia to the Bowery. Also while there are many miles between those two points, one has to travel hard, very hard and fast, to land on the Bowery, as Victor H. Benke did.

There are many who do and always will remember Benke's arrival on the Bowery, and his first appearance in the Bowery Mission.

One of the staunchest friends of the mission is Mrs. Sarah I. Bird, whom I have often called the "Mother of the Derelicts." Over a score of years has been spent by this unassuming, lovely woman in philanthropic work of the most efficient sort. Having an abundance of means, Mrs. Bird was not only a liberal contributor to charitable work, but brought her personal effort to help. She had been a subscriber and worker in settlement work until the earnest work done by the Bowery Mission attracted her attention and determined her to become

an active helper there. To save the derelicts of the Bowery from a fate which always invariably leads to destruction is not a very alluring or easy task—and that is just one of the reasons why Mrs. Bird decided to take it up. Where the need is greatest there we must work the hardest.

It was easily recognised by Mrs. Bird that personal contact with the men to be helped was essential. A plan which she conceived, and which was gladly indorsed by the superintendent of the mission, resulted in establishing her at the Bowery Mission as hostess every Sunday morning. The friendless and homeless men showed their appreciation by overwhelming attendance, and the occasions became quickly known as "Mother Bird's mornings."

The inauguration of these Sunday mornings showed Mrs. Bird as understanding the position of the homeless men thoroughly. There is no more dreary and abject day for the friendless man than Sunday. During the week the city, full of life and frenzied activity, holds out the possibility of some lucky chance. At any rate food—via the free lunch-counter or some charitable source—can be obtained. But all these possibilities are not existing on Sundays. And so as Sunday is surely the day when one's thoughts should get away from earthly things and soar on upwards, Mrs. Bird determined to make attendance at the services at the

Bowery Mission easy for her unfortunate friends by providing an early lunch for them. Until recently I was a resident of that part of the city, and I have seen with my own eyes the crowds of poor fellows gather around the mission door hours before their admittance. And say all you want about pauperising, when a man will walk miles to be in time for his cup of coffee and sandwich, he—well, he needs the sandwich and ought to have it. But the best feature of Mother Bird's mornings is that the men cannot run in and out after partaking of the food. The sandwiches themselves are sandwiched between word of gospel and hymn of praise, and there is enough evidence to show that the seed scattered in this way has borne fruit unexpectedly and lavishly. One of these instances of corroborating evidence was the case of Victor H. Benke.

Along the Bowery on one Sunday morning came a derelict, if there ever was one. That he was homeless, penniless, and friendless goes without saying. The rest of his description must be omitted, as it would not appear well in print, and would be of no practical value. We all have seen men like him, and have shuddered at their dilapidation and degradation.

There is a freemasonry among the wrecks, and current gossip had informed Benke that hot coffee and sandwiches could be had without asking and by just sitting through a short service every Sun-

day morning at the Bowery Mission. At eight o'clock this Sunday morning, in company with many hundreds on like errand, Benke squeezed himself into the mission, never dreaming that the turning-point of his downward career had arrived. And, mind you, it was not the realisation of his wickedness, but just his empty, hungry stomach, which led him to the good old Church of Sinners.

Until eleven years ago the musical part of the services at the mission left much to be desired. It seemed impossible to obtain the regular services of a pianist, and the seat at the piano was generally taken by some obliging friend of the work. It was somewhat of a drawback, as the workers of the mission wanted to make things as attractive as possible, and Mrs. Bird especially felt this keenly, as she wanted to make her Sunday mornings particularly cheerful and yet inspiring. And being one who has long studied the temperamental and sometimes disarranged mental make-up of the men who come to the Bowery Mission and other places of like sort, I am in a position to assure you that quite frequently the e'er-remembered strain of some old, sweet melody, fraught with the memories of a clean, white past, will far outreach a dried-and-cut sermon in effectiveness. Ninety per cent. of the men are emotional creatures, largely the victims of their emotions, and it takes an inspired, emotional moment to bring them back again.

On this Sunday morning when Benke made his first appearance at the mission Mrs. Bird was deeply chagrined on finding that the friend who had promised to help at the piano was at the last moment unable to come. Knowing that this would be a sore disappointment to the men, Mrs. Bird made no official announcement of the pianist's non-appearance, hoping that somebody else might show up, or trusting that the singing alone would prove a satisfying substitute. As soon as it was time for the first musical number of the service the singing was started without a leader. It was weird. I do not know if it has ever been your privilege to listen to one of these impromptu choruses intoned by a few hundred of husky Bowery lads, but I have sat within the sound of such occurrence, and while I shall never forget it, I am not at all anxious to repeat the experience. These things are much better imagined than described. Even the most realistic writer will balk at describing certain events.

The five hundred men who sat before Mrs. Bird thought this their opportunity to show their loyalty and affection. Of course they could get along for one Sunday without a leader.

Just listen to this!

Mrs. Bird listened. She couldn't help it. The volume of—of—tone that struck her ears also deafened her. It has not yet been proven that they

all sang the same hymn. I have been told that the men thought this a splendid occasion to render their favourite hymns—individually. There seems to be no doubt about the "rendering," but the ensemble effect was somewhat spoiled by the mosaic of selection. A chorus of five hundred singing "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Throw Out the Life Line," "Where is My Wandering Boy To-night?" and others of equal degree of popularity, all singing at the same time and *ad libitum,* might be startling, but it is scarcely harmonious.

There was a limit to Mrs. Bird's endurance—and nerves. Eventually she succeeded in quieting the groaning sea of sound and told them frankly of their difficulty.

"I am very sorry about this disappointment. The friend who promised to officiate at the piano and lead the singing was detained at the very last moment. We usually sing so well, and are so used to accompaniment, that I am not surprised at our being all at sea to-day."

Had Mrs. Bird stopped right there the Bowery Mission would not have had one of its most inspiring incidents, and poor Benke would, most likely, have slid all the way down the path of destruction. But, moved by the spirit of custom, Mrs. Bird made the usual ending of such explanation, and set the wheels of Providence awhirling.

"Of course," she continued, "if there were any-

one present to play for us it would help us greatly, but as there isn't——"

A commotion on the last bench interrupted the speaker. She waited patiently, thinking the disturbance would be only temporary, but the interrupter was persistent and would not be subdued.

At last he could be heard.

"I'll play! I'll play for you!"

Down the aisle he came shuffling, showing to the entire congregation how fearfully he had been "up against it."

Ushers and others tried to bar him, but a peculiar light shone in his eyes and he waved them aside, keeping on to the platform.

Facing Mrs. Bird he again repeated his assertion.

"I can play! I'll play for you!"

There are times in rescue work when diplomacy has to be coupled with religious spirit. Such a time was confronting Mrs. Bird. The question came to her if it would not turn an intendedly devotional service into a farcical performance by permitting this wreck to disport himself at the piano to the delight of his friends in the assemblage. Besides, there was no assurance that the man was sober, or that his musical genius was not the fabric of his intoxication.

"It is very good of you to offer your services, but I think we can get along without the piano this morning, and I really believe the instrument is

locked, the last player having taken the key and——"

"The key is in the lock," remarked the stranger, and without further ado proceeded to open the instrument.

Further parley was out of the question, and hoping for the best, yet fearing the worst, Mrs. Bird abandoned further diplomacy.

There was something in the man's movements which was reassuring. Such small details as the lifting of the cover, the adjustment of the stool, showed that he was not unfamiliar with the task before him. Seated before the instrument—it had served many years—the man remained in quiet for about a minute. Then, as if out of his muddled brain a message had come to him, the fingers sought the keys with sure touch.

As soon as he began Mrs. Bird thought there was something uncanny about it all. How could such melody come from that old piano, out of which the usual players could coax only the barest accompaniment.

But Benke played on, forgetting, perhaps, his surroundings and dreaming of the pure, clean days of yore. First, softly, like the whispered greeting of two old friends, the prelude cooed and sang in highest treble. Then came the purpose of the harmony, to make men more plastic for the waiting message, and trembling, determined, full and sweet

the chords rolled on and on until the arched ceiling itself vibrated in response. The old instrument knew its master and answered willingly to every demand. They were in communion. And into every corner, every crevice of the spacious hall sank melody divine, the tone confession of the regenerated player.

The hundreds sat as if enchanted. No one can tell you what was played or how long the music lasted on that morning. They only know that for a period all too brief they were lifted out of themselves, away from their misery, their filth, their degradation by this playing of one of their own kind, a wreck from the streets.

At last the harmony died away, the stranger arose, and, as in the song later built about this incident, tried to make his way back to his seat, the last bench in the hall, the seat of the most miserably lost. But his return was more difficult than his previous advance. Hands were stretched out to him from all sides, and he was led back again to the platform and the piano.

There was no further dissatisfaction with the musical part of the service that morning. At the end of the meeting Mrs. Bird engaged Benke's services for the mission on the spot, and he worked faithfully until his death, about a year ago.

It would not surprise me to find some who—and apparently justifiably so—would judge that the

peculiar discovery of Benke and the emotional conditions accompanying it were resultant in an overrating of his standing as a musician. However, an abundance of proof is at hand to disprove this.

Benke's advent at the Bowery Mission, and the story of his conversion, drew many to the place from curiosity. Eventually some musicians of established reputation heard him play, and the last doubt anent his genius was removed. A further indorsement was the splendid gift which arrived one day at the Bowery Mission.

A friend of the mission and one of its chiefest supporters heard Benke at the piano, and was so impressed by his playing that he resolved to provide him with a fitting instrument. Inquiries brought the news that the beautiful organ of the Marquand Chapel in Princeton was for sale, and it was purchased for sixteen thousand dollars. The purchase and gift were made so quietly that only very few persons know that Dr. Louis Klopsch was the donor of this magnificent present.

A further corroboration of Benke's ability was the fact that shortly after his appearance at the Bowery Mission he was asked to assist at the mammoth revival meetings held by Moody and Sankey at Cooper Union. Immediately after his début there he was requested to take full charge of the musical part of the services. It proved a providential ex-

perience for Benke. During the meetings he became acquainted with the famous hymn writers, an experience which stood him in good stead later on.

With the establishment of Benke at the Bowery Mission the services became doubly attractive. Mr. J. G. Hallimond, the superintendent of the mission, believes, with many other liberal-minded men engaged in the work, that music, good music, has a place in rescue efforts. If nothing else, music will at least help the unfortunate men to spend a few hours in decent, wholesome environment. With the coöperation of Benke Thursday concerts were installed at the mission, and it is only necessary to look at the names of some of the artists who volunteered at these evenings to judge the quality of the entertainments offered. Among them were Gwilym Miles, Hans Kronold, Theodore Bjorksten, Mrs. Rollie Borden Low, and others of equal prominence.

To develop the home talent Benke organised the Bowery Mission quartette, and it was not long before they were asked to sing at many churches and meetings. I have been on the same platform with the quartette, and it has always been a source of pleasure to me to have these melodious and yet militant soldiers back of me as sort of moral support.

The quiet, well-groomed man whom I had the

pleasure of meeting shortly before his death had rather striking views on the emigrant question.

"It is surprising that even at this late date the people of the smaller towns in Germany are so ignorant regarding conditions here," he said in a reminiscent mood. "You will hardly credit it, but there are people at home who firmly and literally believe that this is the land of milk and honey. Take me, for instance. Although not of the ignorant class, I shared this impression, and when I arrived here started in to spend my small patrimony without compunction. I had no care. Was not this the land of promise, of prosperity, America? Alas, it did not take me long to ascertain that as a press agent the emigration solicitor stands supreme. One morning I found myself flat broke, and realised that here, as elsewhere, a man must chiefly depend on his own efforts."

"And then came experiences, I suppose?" I questioned.

"Experiences? Why, yes, I suppose you might call them that. These experiences helped to embitter me and made me take that oblique view of life which starts so many on the downward course. Once you begin to rile and rebel against all existing conditions and religion, the devil will greet you as an old friend. Perhaps one of my most disagreeble experiences happened on board of an oyster boat along the Maryland coast. The wages

were ten dollars a month. I was on board two months, and was not permitted to leave the boat during that time. Still, at the end of that period, I was informed by the skipper that I owed him forty-two cents. If people knew more of the cruelty and suffering on those oyster boats public demand would effect a change."

"But from where and from whom do you get your talent?" I asked again.

"I can hardly say that I inherited it, because I came from a most unmusical family. My father was an architect in Ratibor in Silesia, and intended me for the Government service. But a musical wave engulfed my brother and myself, and we determined to become musicians. My brother Ernest has been the violoncellist of the orchestras of Sir Charles Halle and Sir Augustus Manns in London. While serving my time in the German army I made up my mind to follow in my brother's steps, but thought America offered a better field. I came here, and it was not long before disappointment and absence of home influences started me on that slide which landed me in the Bowery Mission on that eventful Sunday morning. Since then I have been happy and anxious to do my share in this work of reclaiming the fallen."

Were additional proof of Benke's qualifications necessary, the fact that he has over four hundred hymns to his credit should surely bring it. Among

his collaborators were Fanny Crosby the blind poet, Charlotte Elliott, Eben E. Redford, and others.

I asked him for his favourite hymn of his own composition.

"My favourite hymn will scarcely be considered a classic, but for personal reasons I like it best. The words were written by W. H. Horner, and the words of it, their application, make me like the hymn:

"'Jesus redeemed and made me whole,
I can forget Him never;
Out of the depths He brought my soul;
Now I am His forever.
I'm holding on, I'm holding on;
Daily in grace I'm growing;
Fast to the Rock I'm holding on,
Peace to my heart is flowing.'"

Benke is gone, but his death must have been peaceful, crowned with the satisfaction of having helped his lesser brethren. There is room for prayer, preaching, and feeding in rescue work, but there is also room and need for music. And he who can bring the dim moisture to bleary eyes with the inspired harmony of his music makes these shrunken hearts and besotted minds more responsive to the call, and is doing work of the right sort in the service of his Maker.

Benke did this work, did it well and faithfully, and may you now sleep well until The Day, you good servant of men and God.

XIV

THE MOTHER OF THE TENEMENTS

HELIOTROPE, carnation pink, new-mown hay, and other fragrances, telling of luxury, ease, and worldliness, have many admirers, but the homelier smell, the fragrance of soapsuds, also has its partisans, and if you, as I, are one of them, let us tell others the story of the Madonna of the Washtub.

Once in a while a poet, whose soul, tired from soaring in Parnassian heights, gets closer to the ground will sing an epic of the lowly, humbler folk that finds an echo in the hearts of millions. But far too little has been sung and rhymed about the lady of the shawl and apron—our mother of the tenement. And these, our mothers, strive their way along, the monotone of it alone a sacrifice, without a murmur or a sound of grumbling, with no reward but that of work well done.

I shall never cease refuting those superficial men and women who picture to you my own people, the lesser and the humble, as growling, grumbling malcontents. Were they that, I, for one, would not always be ready to fight for them with word of

mouth or pen. One cannot fight an honest battle unless the cause is good.

Poverty often breeds greedy selfishness, but it also brings out the very best that is in human nature, and never seems more golden than when gilded by the quiet, daily sacrifices of those first ladies of the land—the mothers of the tenements.

Ah, well do I know them!

When a lad of the streets I loved them; when a youth they were my sweethearts. But they would not wait for me and went and got married; and even now, although they treated me so shamefully, I still love them, and more, respect them.

To meet them you need not make a special appointment. Their days are all alike, and they are never away from home. Scores of them do not get beyond the boundaries of two or three blocks from their homes in years, and know as little about the "uptown world" as they know of the life therein.

So if you would like to meet her, you may accompany me to call on Mrs. Mac.

Arrived at her door, we hear the peculiar "tschuck, tschuck" produced by the piano of the tenement—the washboard—while Mrs. Mac herself hums lustily:

"Now, Mrs. MacFarlane she weighed forty-four;
If she'd weighed forty-five, then she'd weighed a pound more."

She does not hear us entering, and changes to her old favourite, "Young Paddy's Colleen."

> "'Muah-ha-ha-hah!'
> Said the Colleen to Paddy.
> 'Muah-ha-ha-hah!'
> Then said Paddy to ——

"I declare if it ain't—the top o' the morning' to ye!" She has seen us at last, and what Paddy said to the Colleen does not become known.

"Now you sit right down here, and I'll have a cup o' tay for you in a twinkling." There is no declining her hospitality, and while she brews the cheering cup, etiquette demands that you inquire: "And how are the children?"

"Ah, they're well, thank you kindly; and Jimmie's growing. Oh, my, but ain't he that! And I say"—Mrs. Mac looks about for eavesdroppers, not for fear of them, but from habit—"my Maggie is keeping company with—ah, I'm sure you'll never guess?"

"Not with Tim Malone, the truck driver?"

"Tim Malone, indeed! No, my Maggie is too good for the loikes o' him. It's Frank Noonan, that's my Maggie's fellow."

"Not Frank Noonan, the leader's son?"

"The very self-same, and I'll have you know my Maggie is fit for the very best o' them."

That, of course, cannot be denied, and while Mrs.

Mac—her name is McCarthy, but all who love her, which means all who know her, call her Mrs. Mac —is busy with the "tay," we look at her humble home.

The three rooms are permeated by the smell of soapsuds, coming from the tub standing beneath the one window in the front room, which was all-kitchen, living, and dining-room, and even bedroom for Jimmie, the "young one." The two bedrooms—the parental chamber and Maggie's boudoir —are dark, depending for their sole ventilation on the narrow slit in the masonry, called ironically "air shaft." But from the bed-clothes to the floor a scrupulous cleanliness prevails.

(Why are we always so ready to believe that poverty loves dirt?)

Facing the door from the hall is the cooking range, which also heats the apartment. In the corner to the right is the cupboard, which, on its gaily papered and fringed shelves, holds all the household utensils and crockery of the family. In the corner to the left is the "old man's" rocker, the "bewraw," and a small table, on which is a stack of coloured newspaper supplements. Between the range and the lounge—Jimmie's couch—is the table, surrounded by four chairs, on which the meals are set, the son's lessons ground out, and the women's sewing done.

True, it is all cheap, tawdry from the green and

red paper on the shelves to the "fashion plates" cut from different publications and gummed to the wall by Maggie, the "darter," but through it all there is the visible desire to give cheer and comfort to her family. The mother has to be all in all—housekeeper, friend, adviser, consoler, judge, executioner, tailor, dressmaker, chaperone, teacher, and everything else.

Tenement-house existences have occasional variances, but unfortunately they are seldom of an agreeable nature. There are the deaths and the greedily expensive funerals, with their obligatory pomp; the only times when the poor ride in state—even if on credit to the undertaker. Illness, with the calls of the doctor, brings also a break in the monotony and gives the family temporary prominence in the neighbourhood; but it is an expensive luxury. Then there are the dispossessions, and is there a street with a stone in its pavement on which, not once upon a time, the dingy lares and penates of a huddled family group cried their own tale to heaven? Also—and this is the most wonderful of all—times come, when the daughter, but lately grown up from a child, dazed and turned by the cheap flatteries of loaferish dandies at the balls and picnics, is missing from the humble place which was a home to her and hers so long. Neither lastly nor leastly are the "celebrations" of the men—usually on their pay-days, when money, neither

morally nor ethically all their own, is spent in carousing and paid for by deprivation. And in all these instances it is the mother, ever patient, ever tried, who has to bear the brunt of it, and straighten matters with kind words or righteous anger.

Mrs. McCarthy has had her share of it all, so, while at the washtub, or hanging the clothes on the line, or at her cooking fire, her thoughts run in narrow compass to the past and the little incidents in the life of the block. As to her aspirations, they are not of the high-flown order. To see that the "old man" and the children have their meals and beds and clean clothes are the ambitions of the mother. To hope that Maggie will marry a man who can give her a home at least as good as her own, and that Jimmie will grow up a smart young fellow, who can make a living more by his mental than his manual labour, are her natural desires. There is no future for her and the "old man," excepting a continuation of the present. She knows it can be nothing else, unless the health of herself or the "old man" should fail before Jimmie and the girl are provided, and then—but Mrs. McCarthy is too cheerful to let such thoughts stay with her long.

Mrs. Mac's alarm clock is the milkman, who comes, with his unearthly noise of tin cans and yells, at the break of day.

James McCarthy, Sr., the "old man," is a driver,

and has to be at the stable every morning at seven o'clock to feed and clean his horses and harness. It takes him more than half an hour to get to the stable from his home. This entails an early breakfast, and we find Mrs. McCarthy rising at five o'clock, to start the fire, cook the breakfast, and superintend the departure of her husband.

Maggie has reached the "young lady" age, which permits a certain independence; and still under the influence of her pleasant dreams, she eats her breakfast in haughty silence—and a few minutes, giving more time to her toilet of hair coiffure and ribbon finery. It should not be supposed that the mother is permitted to remain idle during this period and watch her daughter's proceedings with reverent wonder. She is constantly asked to fasten buttons and hooks, or to tie a bow here and there.

Then, when it is seemingly finished, a final inspection generally ends with: "Say, ma, ain't the pink ribbon a little too loud on this sea-green waist?"

And "ma" has to weigh the matter with intense seriousness before pronouncing her ultimatum.

The parting kiss is never forgotten, and before Maggie has descended the three flights of stairs to the street, the mother—summer or winter, rain or shine—leans from the window to get a last glimpse of her daughter before she mingles with

the crowd of workers hastening to their daily toil. Shutting the window, "ma" looks toward the lounge, where her tousled and freckled boy is enjoying his last moments in slumberland. There is absolutely nothing angelic about the urchin; in fact, he is rather an ordinary kid; but to this plain woman, with her heart of gold, he is the only boy in all this world, the centre point of her emotions, also the objective point of her maternal spankings.

Then it's "Jimmie, boy, don't you want no breakfast?"

And Jimmie? He rolls about lazily and growls, "Oh, leave me alone, ma; leave me alone."

But the mother caresses and tickles, until the boy, in high dudgeon, jumps from his couch and runs for his shoes.

In the meanwhile the mother heats the coffee and cuts more bread, and then puts that enormous tin affair, the washboiler, in commission. It's Monday —and wash day.

Jimmie, eyes only half open, is, nevertheless, sufficiently wide awake to the main chance, which means to "beat washing his face." But in vain is all his diplomacy.

"Now, Jimmie, take your basin like a good boy, and give your face a good washing—Heaven knows you need it."

The operation is not permitted to be performed out in the hall, "in under the sink," but must take

place in the room, where "ma" watches with most unrelenting zeal that the neck and the ears are properly "lathered and scrubbed."

At last this torture is ended, and Jimmie, with shining nose, glowing cheeks, and plastered hair, sits down to the table to eat his morning meal in company with his mother, who has deferred breaking her fast until now.

This meal is a very pleasant one to Mrs. McCarthy, and yet a tinge of regret is ever present.

"And what will you be learning to-day, Jimmie?" she will ask.

"Ah, language and joggraffy and all them things," comes the answer, with the assurance of the scientist.

"Now, in joggraffy you learn all about the other countries, don't you, Jimmie?"

"Sure! All about Germany, and France, and Africa—but I ain't that far yet."

"Now, tell me, Jimmie, has the teacher been telling you anything about the auld country—about Ireland? Has he now?" and a wistful note whispers in her question.

"Naw! There ain't no such country, teacher says. They ain't got no king nor nothing, and they belong to England," answers Jimmie, without regard for his mother's feeling, she seeing in her mind's vision the picture of the long ago, when she sailed from the banks of the River Shannon, to

come, a buxom lass, to these shores of the promised land.

Short is the day dream, for the hour is getting late. Jimmie has to be bundled off to school, and there is much work to do.

But Mrs. McCarthy is a woman for all that, and while she rolls her sleeves back over the plump arms, she stands in front of the looking-glass and looks at herself. It's a pleasant reflection that greets her. The hair, the nose, and the eyes are unmistakably Irish; in other words, the hair is like gold when looked at in the shadow; the nose is ambitious and striving upward, and the eyes—ah, the eyes, they are true and affectionate, and damp with a glorious dew. One more look does the plump little lady permit herself, and then it's "to work."

First, the bedding is pulled apart and shaken; then the floor is swept and dusted. This done, the dishes and cooking utensils are washed and dried, and after that the principal event of the day's programme—the washing—is begun in the proper spirit of energy. And for hours and hours there is no sound in the room excepting the "tschuck, tschuck" which we heard on our entrance, and, perhaps, the snatch of a favourite song.

Little occurs during the day to interrupt Mrs. Mac, not even luncheon. Only when one of the ladies of the neighbourhood calls is a somewhat ceremonial tea spread. At other times, a sip from

her cup and a bite from a crust, taken while passing the range or the table, is all the food consumed. And this in spite of the fact that not one minute of the day is permitted to go to waste. Even during visits of neighbours the work is not stopped.

These visits are about the only recreation vouchsafed to these mothers of the tenements. Sure it is nothing but gossip, but we should not forget how very small their world is, bounded by an almost immediate horizon. Also, it is not all praiseworthy that is discussed at these visits, and many reputations are dissected and sometimes condemned; but before condemning, let us remember the saying about people who live in glass houses. To offset the evil side of these chats, it must be stated that they are the only channels through which the calamities of the district become known, and I know of occasions where two or three women, after discussing recent sicknesses or other ills which had befallen their neighbours, combined to alleviate the suffering or misery they had talked about. It is a small, a very small, world in which they live, yet in it you will find, as elsewhere, many shortcomings and failings, and, also, all noble sentiments made doubly worthy by their humble environment.

After the washing has been "hung out on the line," Mrs. Mac has not much time left for the mending and patching of her family's wearing apparel. Even if she is careless about her own eating,

she cannot neglect the others, and with the arrival of the last of the family the supper is ready and placed on the table.

It is the only time during the day that the entire family meets. However, great hilarity is not the order, as the meal is more of a labour than a pleasure, and is finished in a very short time.

One of the sad things of tenement-house life is that the home circle is so little cultivated. There are several reasons for this, one being that mental activity is exceedingly limited. Another reason is that the quarters are generally so small that a comfortable gathering around the hearth is well-nigh impossible.

In the case of the McCarthys, Jimmie lacked sufficient room for his boyish pranks; the "old man" missed his important political controversies, and Maggie—well, Frank Noonan, her "steady," was waiting downstairs. And so we find Mrs. Mac, even before the last dish is removed from the table, again deserted and devoted to her work, while her charges are following the different promptings of their inclinations. But there is not a word of protest, for she is a mother of the tenements, and as such cannot expect to be an exception.

The room once more set in order, Mrs. Mac reaches a very pleasant task in her routine. Fixing the fire and turning low the light, she leaves for the store to do her marketing. Every shop window on

the way has been often scrutinised before, still she cannot resist the temptation of looking at many of the things, in which, by having longed for them so long, she has an almost proprietary right. And then the pricing at the store is another pastime. True, the grocer does not carry very many delicacies —they would remain unsold on his shelves; but the few he has for decorative purposes are handled and bargained for as if the women really meant to buy them.

Her modest purchases made, Mrs. Mac returns home, noting that her own daughter, Maggie, has an intensely interesting rendezvous with Frank Noonan at the door of the tenement. A wealth of faith has Mrs. Mac in her daughter; still she is only a simple young girl, and the maternal care is forever watching over her.

Nodding kindly to the young man, who doffs his hat with a cheery "Good-evening, Mrs. McCarthy," the old lady climbs the stairs to her top floor, resting many times on the way, for indeed her limbs are tired.

But now the schedule of the day is drawing to its close. This is indicated by getting the couch ready for Jimmie. He is the first victim to be sent to sleep, and is summoned in clarion tones by his mother from the window. And the stubby-nosed kid is undressed and tucked under his blankets with a care the very essence of tenderness. Soon he is

asleep, and then the thoughts of Mrs. Mac turn to the "old man" and hopes for his early home-coming.

She is not disappointed, for ere long the heavy tramp on the stairs tells his return, which is quickly followed by his going to bed. He, too, is made comfortable and easy, before the mother looks at the old clock—winding it at the same time—and thinks of the pair downstairs. All things must come to an end, and so the mother appoints herself love's rude awakener.

She descends to the street, winds the apron around her arms, and stepping through the doorway, she cruelly interrupts the cooing pair.

"It's a lovely evening, Frank Noonan," she says, with natural diplomacy, and walks to the curb, looking at the sky and roofs of houses.

Now, I am sure you know it—it is well-nigh impossible to talk love's language in the presence of a third person, and Frank Noonan suddenly awakes to the fact that it is very late. His good-night to Maggie is soft and whispered. Then to the mother—"Almost time to be in bed, Mrs. McCarthy. I guess I'll be going home."

"Are you going, Frank? Well, good-night to you, boy, and may you have pleasant dreams."

"Thank you, Mrs. McCarthy, and the same to you. Good-night to you both."

Mother and daughter ascend together in silence.

"Good-night, ma;" the daughter retires, and again the mother is left alone.

The finale has come!

The fire receives the needed attention, Jimmie is once more covered with his blankets, and the lamp extinguished. Now the mother's work is done.

So, first to rise and last to retire, the mother of the tenement goes to her well-earned rest, from which she will waken to find the new-come day the twin of the one just past.

That is the story of the mother of the tenement, and now after reading it you may feel a slight disappointment. It is simply a chronicle of toil, the toil which you know so well, and not a legend or romance of great and heroic deeds.

You, if you are a woman, may have had days exceeding the day of the mother of the tenement in severe labour. Still, I know that after a moment's reflection you will see the hardship of her lot.

There are many staunch-hearted women in the farmhouses of our country who, year in and year out, know naught but work from the lark's awakening to the firmament's greatest starry glory, and they at first glance might say, "Do I not work harder than that mother of the tenement?"

I know but little, too little, of the life of the farm and field, and it is not for me to decide that question. But I do know this one thing, that your re-

ward, whether appreciated or not, is greater. Have you not God's green about you, and the smell of the hay, the madrigals of feathered choirs, and, above all, the heaven-perfumed, dew-sprayed air of nature? Your life is not spent in the radius of a few feet of space—you have miles. And, if nothing else, you at least can always see before you the creation of the All One.

Have you ever had a peep into the yards of the tenements? It seems as if covered by a network—the lines of washing day running from house to house. Follow these lines, and you will find women working and toiling who have lost all remembrance of flowers, to whom a leaf itself is as a mystery. You will see women, homely, yet loyal, bend to their task with dull and duller growing hearts, because the beauty of life is a thing they have not even heard of.

While writing the preceding paragraphs I have had come to my mind the picture of the "Man with the Hoe." Do as I did and draw the parallel. If he, the man of coarser grain, stands level with the ox out there in nature's realm, how is it with the woman of a texture in which each fibre longs for love, affection, and sympathy, who lives down here among my humble folk, and never can inhale the moist smell of the earth or faint odour of even the blade of grass?

Make it a personal question.

You in the country work, perhaps, one or two hours longer than the woman of the tenement, but would you exchange places with her? I hardly think so.

And even were I wrong, you will believe in my faith and respect for the women of our land, and, because of that, you would think less of me were I not loyal to her, the only mother I have known—the mother of the tenements.

XV

THE CASE OF OFFICER FLANAGAN

TO centre all one's ideas and actions in the singleness of one purpose often produces a mental condition resembling monomania. We have so many proofs of this theory that any additional instances would seem superfluous. Still, I cannot refrain from telling you the following story, because it promised so little and ended so unexpectedly. Besides, it is true, and is still lived by its principal actors.

No family among the humble folk in the Sixth Ward enjoyed greater popularity than the Streppers. It was a standing joke in the neighbourhood than, eventually, old man Strepper would be the father-in-law to most of the young men in the ward. No jest ever perpetrated had a greater chance of becoming a probability. The Streppers were blessed with a family of six children, and they were all girls.

There were some who pitied old Strepper for being provided with such an abundance of femininity, but he took it very philosophically.

"Ach, what's the difference," he would say.

"They don't eat half as much as the boys, and they get married soon, and then the husband has to buy them the dresses and all the other folderols."

The intervals in the ages of the girls were marvels of exactness, and between Lena, the oldest, and Lizzie, the youngest, was a difference of just six years.

What to do with the girls and how to bring them up never seemed a difficult problem to Mrs. Strepper. As soon as age permitted they had to get whatever "schooling" the public schools of the neighbourhood afforded.

"Fellows, nowadays, don't marry no girls that ain't got no eddikation," was the way Mrs. Strepper summed up the situation.

During their spare hours from study the girls were trained in the mysteries of housekeeping, also a most important detail in the matrimonial virtues of a tenement-house girl.

To graduate from these educational courses, only age, not efficiency, was required. When the limit of age fixed by the factory laws was reached the girls were apprenticed to some shop to learn a trade, and to contribute their mites to the defraying of the household expenses.

Taking it all in all the Streppers were quite contend with their lot, and thought the future would develop as they had built it. The children grew up to be the most handsome girls in the ward, and

when Lena reached her eighteenth year there was no dearth of suitors for her hand. Lena's choice, fully sanctioned by her mother, was Cornelius Flanagan.

This young fellow had started life under a handicap and had fallen a victim to it. Old Roderick Flanagan, his father, had come to this country from the North of Ireland, and was an "Orangeman." This in itself was enough to create a prejudice against him, in a locality in which all other naturalised citizens were of opposite political and religious beliefs.

To increase the feeling against him, Roderick Flanagan, by his inherited shrewdness and strong personality, succeeded in making himself a powerful factor in the politics of the ward, and could be hated but not ignored.

With the attaining of his majority came political aspirations and ambitions to the son, and Cornelius Flanagan, lacking the personal attributes of his sire, fell to the level of the ordinary ward youth, being like putty in the hands of the scheming statesmen, and foolishly building hopes on their delusive promises.

Old Flanagan was not long in realising that his son would never be his political heir, and, after getting him into the Police Department, told him that he would have to shape his own career. The old man's ensuing death made this a stern reality, and

Cornelius' aspirations shrank to the hope of being able to retain his present job, which is described in the vernacular as "pounding the pavement."

All this did not prevent Officer Flanagan from seeming a very desirable matrimonial catch to the mothers of the many marriageable tenement belles.

"Ach, he's no worse than most o' them, and besides, he's got a steady job that he can't lose without doing something terrible, and Cornelius ain't going to do nothing like that," said Mrs. Strepper, when her husband remonstrated with her on hearing her matrimonial plans for Lena.

"But, mother, whenever he's off duty he's stuck in Duffy's, playing cards and hanging out in there; and you know what kind of a gang is round that corner."

"Now, see here, father," Mrs. Strepper replied, "if you expect Lena to marry an angel, she'll be an old maid all her life. There ain't no angels coming round this ward, and Cornelius Flanagan is as good a man as is to be found on the average. If he wouldn't make a good husband, do you think all the women would be half crazy to get him away from my Lena and catch him for their own daughters?"

Strepper did not attempt to answer this, preferring to depend on the wisdom of his better half. And she should not be too hastily judged. To provide six girls in any social sphere with suitable

husbands is no easy task; and in a neighbourhood in which the salaries of the young men were far below the amount earned by policemen no mother felt inclined to cheat her daughter out of a chance to marry one of these uniformed prizes.

The courtship of Lena Strepper and Cornelius Flanagan had grown from very small beginnings. The home of the Streppers was on the beat of the young officer, and seeing the girl going to the near-by stores, and, later, to her daily work, their acquaintance had developed from merely nodding to each other to long and earnest conversations at the door of the tenement.

Lena Strepper was a typical East Side girl. Her duties, including the work of the house and at the shop, as well as her church attendance, were performed with punctilious regularity, and even her social pleasures were enjoyed with great earnestness. Needless to say, the latter were of a very harmless nature, and never "taken in," unless accompanied by Cornelius Flanagan, who would have often preferred amusements of a more boisterous kind. However, his love for Lena was as sincere as his love could be, and he suppressed his inclinations out of deference for her.

Their courtship had reached the critical period when nothing excepting the naming of the date remained to be done, and their dream seemed very near realisation—to be cruelly dispelled by a most un-

fortunate calamity. Mrs. Strepper fell ill and, ere long, it became evident that it was her last sickness.

Through the long days and nights she was nursed with loving care by her children, was never left alone, yet, without ceasing, she cried for Lena, the oldest. This desire to have her always by the bedside made Lena give up her work at the shop and to assume full charge of the sick-chamber and distracted family. Lena's cheerfulness upheld the spirits of the Strepper household, but she herself was destined to have a heavy burden of responsibility placed on her willing shoulders.

It came during the early morning hours of her watch by the invalid, that she found the course of her life directed into different channels. The rest of the family, tired from their unceasing vigil, were slumbering, and the whispered words of the mother were distinctly audible to Lena, whose ear was closely bent to the murmuring lips.

"Lena."

"Yes, mother."

"I guess you'll have to look out for father and the girls."

"Oh, I don't mind doing that until you get well again."

"There's no use o' talking that way, Lena. I'm going, and I guess you all know it. Don't you be jollying me now, Lena. You're the oldest, and

you ought to have more sense. And there's no time for it, anyway, because I think I'll never see daylight again."

"Oh, don't be talking like that, mother. It makes me cry; and, besides, the doctor ain't said so yet."

"Now, Lena, I don't want to set myself up for no better than I am, but I been going to church regular, and I think I can understand that our Father is going to call me home. And, Lena, I'm worried about what's going to become o' pa and the children."

"Don't worry, mother, don't worry," and the girl's hand smoothed the grey hair of her mother with indescribable tenderness. "You know you can depend on me, and that I'll look out for them always."

"No, you can't, Lena," said the patient, almost peevishly. "You're the oldest, and you been always a good girl, and it won't be right for you, now that you got the finest chance in the ward, to be stuck in the house all the time. No, daughter, you got to marry Flanagan and—oh, what will become o' them all when you go 'way, too?"

"Now, don't go on so, mother. I can marry Flanagan and look out for the house, too. We been keeping company so long that it don't make no difference whether we get married this year or a couple o' years from now, and, by then, they'll be

all grown up, and, maybe, married, too, and father can come to live with me and Cornelius."

"No, father would never give in to that," said the mother sadly. "He's always been against you marrying Flanagan; and the others—why, they're only little girls, and it'll be years before they'll be anything like you."

When the mother died Lena thought herself firmly pledged to take her place, and to be a mother to all of her sisters until they had been wisely provided for.

Although their minds were dulled with grief, the members of the Strepper family could not fail to notice the change which had come over Lena with the death of the mother. As soon as the family had returned from the humble funeral, and the five younger children had retired to rest or to nurse their sorrow, the father spoke to the new foster-mother.

"What's the matter, Lena?"

"Nothing, father. Why?"

"Oh, you been acting kind o' funny like, so quiet, and as if you got a whole lot older in the last few hours. Lena, girl, you know we're all sorry and miss our dear old mother, but it ain't right to give way like that and to forget that we got to keep on living."

"That's just what's the matter, father," answered the girl. "We got to keep on living, and I

promised mother to take her place and to look after the whole of you, so that you won't miss her so much, and that you be taken care of, and the girls be provided for wisely and in time."

"Is that it?" smiled the father. "Why, Lenchen, we won't give you much trouble, and that shouldn't worry you so much. Besides, there's Annie, that's only a year younger than you, and all the others, too, they'll be grown up before you know it, and then you won't have to kill yourself working for us."

"I guess that's true, father; but I promised mother, and it is my duty," and with that Lena sounded the keynote of her future life.

Old Strepper and the sisters, not familiar with cases of such focussed devotion, did not interfere with Lena, feeling convinced that her "fit" would pass into normality in a short time. Their expectations were wrong, for Lena, instead of abating her enthusiasm, became almost a fanatic.

She seemingly forgot the short span of time which stood between herself and her sisters, and unconsciously assuming the demeanour of an aged woman, acted the part of mother with a most astounding naturalness. To be "mothered" by their own sister was, at first, repugnant to the other children. Then they made her the target of ridicule.

The father did not take sides in this family evolution, preferring to wait for its outcome. As weeks and weeks passed by, without increasing the

expense account or diminishing the fare, he thought it best to let conditions remain as they were.

Once it occurred to him to inquire what Lena did with the small balance left from her weekly allowance and not accounted for in her statement.

"What you been doing with that eighty cents you made on this week's bill, Lena?"

"Why, didn't you folks have enough to eat?"

"Oh, yes, only I thought that if you had nothing better to do than to buy some useless trash with the difference, you might as well let me have it to save it up and buy something decent."

"Well, pa, I don't think flowers is much use, but I been sending the girls over in turns on Sundays to take over the few pinks and roses that I could buy for them few pennies, so's mother's grave wouldn't look so bare."

The father was silent for quite a time.

"Say, Lenchen, that's all right and I ain't begrudging nothing for that. But why don't you go over some Sunday, or go out of an evening? You'll be sick, staying in the house the way you do."

"I can't, father. You know I got to look after the house and the girls," and she went back to her work.

The one who suffered most from this transformation of Lena was Cornelius Flanagan. To call at the girl's house was out of the question, as the father's aversion was by no means overcome, and

Lena would have never consented to see her intended in his absence and while she was alone. His only opportunities to exchange a word with her were when he was lucky enough to meet her on an errand to one of the stores. But she was not inclined to listen to any talk about naming the day, sending Flanagan away with the vague ultimatum that she had a duty now and could not think of getting married while the children had still to depend on her.

He, too, hoped that Lena would change her mind; but a twelvemonth went around, and Annie, the next in age, forsook the parental roof to get married, and Flanagan's fate was still the same. There were times when his patience became exhausted and he spoke quite bluntly.

"Now, see here, Lena. It would be all right if your sisters really needed you. But they're all grown up, and there is enough o' them to take care of the old man. If you were to marry me now, I'd give you an allowance, and then you could hire a woman to go and take your place to do the heavy work in your father's house."

"It ain't the work so much, Cornelius, as that they ain't got no mother, and I promised to stay and do my duty to them."

"Gracious, Lena, you're talking as if you was seventy-five and the others about three or four years. I don't blame you for trying to live up to

the promise you made the old lady as long as it's necessary, but that you been doing long ago, and now you owe it to me to say good-bye to all that and to marry me."

It was all in vain.

"I can't help it, Cornelius, and I hope you won't be mad; but I promised mother——" was her invariable answer.

Time never stops, and in due course chick after chick left the coop, until only one, Lizzie, the youngest, remained. I do not know if Lizzie turned out to be a spoiled girl. If she did not it was not her fault, for no mother could have lavished more affection and tenderness on her than Lena did. Lena fairly worshipped and slaved for the last one of her charges.

Through it all, a term of several years, Flanagan had stood staunch and hopeful so far as his love for Lena was concerned, but had not improved thereby. His stubbornness helped him to swallow the jests which were made at the expense of his enforced celibacy, but to put himself into better humour afterward he had taken more and more to drinking. All this comedy-drama was played in a very narrow compass, and it was only natural that Lena heard of the evil ways of her lover. It needed only that to fairly upset her.

At last came the day on which also the youngest, Lizzie, was ready to follow her husband into her

new home, and it was an event which produced varying effects in the hearts and minds of those interested.

Cornelius Flanagan used the occasion as an excuse to get drunk and to gain forcible entrance into the Strepper apartments, from which he was expelled by the father, who had determined to repay Lena's years of toil by making her the sole object of his paternal love and care.

Lena had attended the wedding ceremony in the little church, but immediately after it went home, not caring to partake of the following feast. Always quiet, her absence was not noticed until the evening had far advanced, and then it was the father who inquired for her.

"Oh, I guess she went home to see if there wasn't some housework to be done," sneered one, and the father, following the hint, hurried to the tenement.

He found one who had once been Lena. Crouching on the floor in her very best dress—it was neither silk nor satin—she was busily scrubbing.

"Lena, what are you doing?" cried the father, feeling himself confronted by a new condition.

A vacant stare was the only answer, then the scrubbing was again resumed.

"Come, Lena," pleaded the father, now thoroughly alarmed, "Lizzie is asking for you and wants you to come back."

She smiled and crooned.

"No, Mamie was calling me, and I told her not to cry, and to have nothing to do with a bad fellow like Eddie; and then Aggie, she wanted me to ask you to forgive her for—but say, father, they're calling me, and I can't find them—I can't find them—and mother told me, and I'm so tired, but I got to look after my chicks, because I'm an old hen; Cornelius said so, and——"

"Lenchen, my Lenchen," the father having stood like one transfixed until then, knelt beside his oldest child and buried his weeping eyes in the tresses of her bowed head, "look at me, Lenchen! Don't you know me? I'm your old father."

"I got to scrub the stairs yet before Lizzie comes home. She always laughed at me."

The father heard no more. The nearest physician was three blocks away, but old Strepper, forgetting his years, ran with marvellous speed.

The noise of the closing door switched Lena into a different mood. The appeals, the cries for her multiplied. It was "Lena, Lena," here and everywhere. Now it came from the bedroom; now from the kitchen, and now from the street. And from there it came so beseechingly that no one could refuse to hurry there to help. But in the street there was nobody to be seen and—oh, yes, now it came from the next block. When that was reached, it came still from the next block, and very soon there

were no more blocks, only a wide street, with a dock and a lot of dark water at the end of it. One doesn't like to jump into the river in one's best frock, but duty is duty, and a promise is a promise, and she thought she heard someone calling, "Lena, Lena." So just one more step, and then it would be found out who was in trouble, Annie or Lizzie, or maybe even Aggie, so here——

"Lena, for heaven's sake, Lena!"

A man in a dishevelled police uniform sprang from a seat on the dock and tore the girl, who was about to jump into the darkness, back to the floor.

For a moment she seemed to get back to reason —just long enough to recognise who had saved her. Then the wandering began again.

"Heavenly Father, you know what trouble I am in, and you will help me. I got to do my duty and keep my promise, and I don't mind, but it breaks my heart to see that Cornelius don't understand, and goes and gets drunk, as if he didn't care for me at all. You know, Father, I love him, and as soon as all my chicks are married—he once called me an old hen—then I can marry him—if he will still have me. I don't think I'm good enough for anything else much than scrubbing and cooking, but I would like so much to be happy for once—and I hope it ain't sinful to wish for that. But, now, please, Heavenly Father, excuse me, but I think Lizzie is crying for me, and——"

All the rest became unintelligible, because two strong arms encircled her and carried her back to the street, where the father, who had tracked her to the river, met them.

"I'll give you a hand carrying her back to the house, and then—I guess I'll go back and do what she meant to do," said Flanagan, as they steadied themselves to help the girl up the street.

"What are you talking about?"

"Why, she knelt down there on that dock and prayed for me—did you hear me?—prayed for me, and I—not even good enough to be food for fishes."

There was that about the moment which swept away all previous misunderstandings, and the father could feel only grateful toward the man who had saved his daughter.

"She prayed for you? Well, then, you're forgiven, for God would not refuse to listen to such a——"

"To such an angel as my Lena," Flanagan interrupted. "Mr. Strepper, I'm through with everything that's bad, and all the rest of my life I shall atone. To-night I had an illustration of how what it seems to have somebody die for you, and now, henceforth, I shall live as He wants me to live. And Lena will help me."

"Don't be too sure o' that, Cornelius. My poor girl is very sick, and maybe she'll never——"

"Oh, yes, she'll be well again, because He

doesn't let such as her die, for they are a power for Him on earth."

Cornelius Flanagan was right for once. Lena was soon nursed back to health and reason, and, at last, got married herself. The only reminder of that night is her hair, which became snowy white.

This story is true. Still, should you doubt me, I can tell you how you can prove it yourself.

If you should ever meet a policeman—I cannot disclose his present rank—at a Christian assemblage, look around the room, and if you see a bright-looking young woman with white hair in his near neighbourhood, you can be reasonably sure that they are Cornelius Flanagan and his wife, or, at least, the originals of these two.

XVI

A LIMB OF THE LAW

IT was Thursday, trial day at headquarters, and the session in the deputy commissioner's room was nearing its end. The usual calendar of minor breaches of the rules and regulations—being off post, in saloons, talking to citizens—had been overshadowed by the importance of Wardman Nugent's case.

The city had been treated to a few disclosures in the police department, and hints by the prosecuting powers seemed to promise even graver revelations. So far only patrolmen and wardmen had been tried, and convicted or acquitted, and the organs of the party press printed columns of unconvincing compassion for these more or less vicarious sufferers, who were magnanimously shielding the real grafters. These straws of sympathy were greedily grasped by those about to drown in the quagmire of corruption, and the *rôle* of persecuted saints sat funnily on the fat-paunched satraps of the hidden powers.

The plague spot first to be probed was the Twelfth Precinct. Here the ruddy illumination of the illegal resorts had thrown a vicious glow over the

entire district. Using the very scum of humanity as fertiliser, the harvest of vice was abundant, and gathered with a searching care which overlooked not the tiniest seed corn. This conscientiousness of the harvesters had been so exemplary that it had been determined to make them the examples.

That the rampage of vice could not have been as unrestrained as it was without the connivance of the police captain—the Old Man—went without saying; but to make surer of his conviction his adjutants and intermediaries were first brought within the toils.

It was owing to this plan of procedure that John Nugent had found himself the defendant in the star trial on this Thursday. It had gone against him. The census of the police department was less by one, and the unfaded spot on his vest where his detective's badge had been fastened was the only outward reminder of Nugent's recent glory and authority.

That the news of his fall had quickly spread through the building was evident. Instead of the former genial greetings of the astute sentries, posted throughout the hall of the sombre building, a noncommittal "How d'you do, John?" given here and there with great caution was the only recognition vouchsafed to Nugent. He felt it. Let the mighty fall, and the slightest omission of the former ceremonial is like a stab.

To show realisation of his disgrace was not among Nugent's traits, and the usual mask of purposeless talk was used.

"Well, Ed, you mightn't believe it," he said to Traphagen, his former "side partner," and still a wardman, "but I'm glad it's all over."

They had descended the stoop leading to the street.

"Are you sure it's all over?" questioned Traphagen dubiously.

"Why, of course it is," replied Nugent assuredly. "They're all through with me."

"Don't you remember that there was some talk about having you indicted by the Grand Jury?"

"Oh, that be blowed! Why did they break me? Only to pave the way for the Old Man's trial. Wasn't that it?"

"Yes, that was one of the reasons."

"That was all the reason!" shouted Nugent, with conviction. "There was just enough evidence to get me out o' the department, but they need more than that 'down below' to convict me in a court."

"And how do you know that they ain't got it?"

"Now what's the use of talking that way?" asked Nugent. "They had several of the fellows indicted, but couldn't convict them on account of the poor evidence. They can't afford to throw any more bluffs, but got to be sure of a conviction before they indict a fellow. Now, the only thing that

could convict me is Schreiber's testimony. And they know that Schreiber'll stick——"

"But will he?" interjected Traphagen. "You know they're a foxy lot o' gents, that new crowd in the district attorney's office, and they made more than one sticker squeal."

"I don't care what they did," said Nugent decisively. "Schreiber is going to stick. They're all through with me, and the only one I'm sorry for now is the captain. They got him cinched, and there's no help for him."

"Well, I hope that's how it is," said Traphagen, apparently unconvinced. "I wish I could feel as confident if I were in your place."

They had come through Mulberry Street and were about to separate at Broome Street when a young man, who seemed to have been waiting for them, came across from Centre Market.

"Want to see you for a minute, Nugent."

Traphagen watched the ex-wardman's face during the recital of the message and saw in its expression a confirmation of his fears.

"What do you think?" cried Nugent, rejoining his friend. "They did indict me! Schreiber squealed! They had the warrant all ready, and now they're after me. They've even been to the house."

"What do you intend to do?" asked Traphagen hopelessly.

"I suppose I got to fight them, after all."

"But can you?"

"That's it. I don't know whether I can or not. With Scheiber on their side—but, great heavens! would you want me to lay down and let them send me away?"

"What else can you do except that or skip?"

"Gee, don't talk that way, Ed, don't," Nugent pleaded. "I'll get bail or something. Skip? Only guilty fellows do that, and there's the wife and——"

"Who, in Heaven's name, would go your bail under these circumstances?" relentlessly questioned Traphagen. "Take my advice and skip. Jersey ain't far. It won't hurt you to stay over there for a few months, and by that time they'll have some of the big fellows and might forget all about you. I got to leave you, John. Don't forget to let me know what you're going to do. So long."

Left alone, Nugent stood a prey to his thoughts.

There had been no false hope about the outcome of the trial at headquarters. Even without the corroboration of his lawyer, Nugent had seen that nothing but dismissal from the force could have been his share. But neither he nor his counsel had dreamed of further persecution. Had this seemed probable, he would have been prepared, would have sent emissaries to Schreiber to get him out of the way, and would have had a bondsman ready to go bail. Coming as unexpectedly as it did, the situation had bereft the ex-wardman of his small allow-

ance of reasoning power. Shuttled by weak bravado and much fear, he floundered, waiting for a cue from destiny.

"Papa."

His little daughter was the prompter of fate.

"Irene, girlie! What are you doing here, so far from the house?"

The blue-eyed little tot, oppressed by the importance of her errand, felt relieved at having this opportunity of unbosoming herself.

"It's only three blocks from the house, and mamma said to run and meet you here, and to give you this when nobody is looking." Nugent led the girl into an empty booth in the market, where he proceeded to read the communication brought by her.

JOHN: The district-attorney's men have been in the house and searched it. They questioned me until I did not know what to say. Now they are hanging around the neighbourhood and waiting for you. Oh, why did you do it, John? From what I understand there is no escape for you. Even the captain was afraid to call at the house, but sent the message I inclose. For Heaven's sake destroy this and the captain's as soon as you read it, and do not send any answer with Irene. They might catch her and search her. Oh, this is fearful, John. I've been expecting it long ago. There was only this one end for it. I don't know how I am going to hear from you in safety. There is always the chance that they might learn where you are keeping yourself. I am crazy, John, over this.

MARY.

The inclosure from the captain was very brief:

Jig is up. Get away as quick as you can. There is no help for you whatever, and if you stay or get caught it would make it only worse for you and me. If you need money, write to Mr. Harrison Wade, in care of Frank's. Tear this up and then burn it.

Nugent obeyed only part of the instructions. He set fire to the note and crushed the ashes with his foot. Then he lifted the little girl to his arms.

"Now, Irene, here's a quarter for you. You run right home and tell your mother that it's all right and that—no, that's all, Irene. And now run home like a good little girl. And, say, Irene, you love your pop, don't you?"

"Oh, how I love my big papa," and two plump arms squeezed the big, ungainly neck with tremendous might. The father set her down, gave her the quarter, and sent her rejoicing on her way.

Nugent watched the little figure until she turned the corner. Then it came to him that he had to act, and act quickly. Here he was, standing in full view at a street corner, no more than three blocks from his home, which was surrounded by his persecutors. His mind, bloated by usurped authority, much lassitude, and undreamed-of prosperity, could no longer argue the confronting condition, and advised flight. He had to get away.

In his muddled state only the most recent suggestions were remembered. Traphagen, his side partner, had mentioned New Jersey. To get there

became his sole intention. Once there, extradition could be fought, which meant long delays, if nothing else. But, though so near, it was not so easy to get there for one who was known to almost every member of the force—that force which played no favourites in the ambition of its units. What a feather in the cap of a humble patrolman—if such there be—to catch the indicted and "wanted" ex-wardman!

Nugent knew all this. His bosom had often throbbed with similar emotions. But he was enough of the gambler to take a chance on luck, placing more reliance on that than on his own shrewdness.

He hurriedly walked toward Broadway, and, keeping a sharp lookout for former colleagues, crossed. He threw a dime to a newsboy and snatched the evening papers. The very first glance showed him that the last few hours had made him the celebrity of the day. His name seemed to glare at him from every page.

A diligent search for the indicted and missing ex-wardman has been instituted by the combined forces of the district-attorney's office and the police department. His early capture is confidently expected.

This paragraph was hammered into Nugent's mind by the sledge of conscience. His courage, dwarfed by copartnership with criminality, deserted

him absolutely, and even his shadow became a pursuing spectre. Hurriedly making his way toward the river front, his gait had almost become a run as he turned into quiet Watts Street.

Here, only a few yards from teeming West Street, within the echo of the noise from piers and ferries, shaded by a solitary tree, was a basement saloon. It was a placid brick building wrapped in tranquillity—suspicious tranquillity. The song and shout of merry roisterers was never heard. No one in the neighbourhood patronised it. Yet, there it was, had been there for years, and seemed to be satisfied with its mysterious existence.

Assuring himself by a furtive glance that he had not been followed, Nugent descended the few steps to the saloon. It was not the first time he had been there. The two men who sat at one of the tables, and the bartender, knew him, but gave no sign of recognition. From the paper, which the bartender had been reading, his name in heavy type again greeted the ex-wardman.

Nugent quickly stepped to the table and addressed himself to one of the men.

"Just the man I want, Charlie."

"You got another guess coming, Nugent," was the cool rejoinder, while the front page of the evening paper was conspicuously displayed to him. "See that? We ain't living out in the woods. We know what's doing and that your 'wanting' days

are over. Besides, there's nothing against me on the blotter just now."

"I don't mean that," Nugent hastened to explain. "I just want to have a little talk with you —and you won't lose nothing by it."

They retired to the rear part of the saloon, and plunged into what seemed to be persuasion pitted against obstinacy.

Charlie was evidently averse to the proposition made to him.

"You ain't got no right to claim that you done me such a great good turn that time you let me get away," growled Charlie. "You copped all the swag that was mine by rights, and then it couldn't be recovered after."

"But wasn't it better to get away than to keep the swag and go up the river for at least a sixer?" asked Nugent, with righteous indignation. "Be a good boy. Help me out o' this and, as I told you, you won't lose nothing by it."

"That's understood," said Charlie. "You don't think for a minute I'm going to do this for love, if I do it at all, which I won't. No, I can't. I ain't got so much agin' you and I'd like to make the money—but there's the gang. If they'd ever hear that I helped a cop, and especially you, out of a hole—well, you know what they'd do to me."

"But I ain't a cop no more, Charlie, and, besides, they'll never know anything about it. Only

you and me know about it, and the dock ain't no more than a jump from here."

Nugent flashed a fat roll of bills with wise intent.

"Well, I tell you," said Charlie, duly impressed by the object lesson. "Give me the money, so's that I can get a boat, and I'll tie it under the dock. And that's all I'm going to do. And, another thing, you got to stay under the dock until I give you the tip to get out. I ain't going to have you hang 'round here and have any of the gang tumble to what kind of game we're cooking up. Is that understood?"

Nugent passed over the money, and, after buying a bottle of whisky, which he put in his pocket, he was led to the dock by his pilot.

The long dock at the foot of Watts Street was on one side crowded with the scows destined to receive part of the city's refuse. An incline, which had to be ascended by the carts to dump their contents into the waiting barges, reached a height of about twenty feet above the level of the pier. Under this incline, salvage from the refuse—rags, paper, bones—was stored by Italians who were working for a contractor, who pays a considerable amount annually to the city for this privilege.

Into one corner of this cavern of rubbish Nugent was led to await the return of Charlie. It was in the afternoon, and, the work of filling the barges being done at night, the place was deserted.

Left alone, Nugent, aided by his bottle, found himself staring into a kaleidoscope of recollections. There were the pictures of the honest young mechanic; of the newly appointed policeman, sworn to protect men and property, to enforce and not to break the laws; of the true little woman, who had married him and who had immediately been burdened with the knowledge of their shame; of the little girl—"papa's own little girl"—who had often, by her childish prattle, momentarily stirred submerged impulses of righteousness, who had made him long to be a worthy parent; and then the apotheosis, the picture of the octopus of systematic and regulated corruption, stifling all else, excepting avarice and greed.

Like a rat in its hole, Nugent slunk back in his corner in the rubbish. He shivered. The bottle was only half emptied. He decreased it to one-fourth.

Sullen despair settled on his mind, and, what he would have least expected—sleep—came to him and bridged the wait to the hour of darkness and escape.

He woke with a start. He had felt a touch. The vision of the two glittering eyes before him was deemed the tail-end of his dream.

"You know me, Meester Policeman, no?"

"No. Who are you and what do you want?" Nugent, now fully aroused, tried vainly to dis-

tinguish the features of the man whose face was in the shadow of the lantern held before him.

"Ah, you no care who I am! I—me, Pasquale Farsotti. Me, a poor dago, a dirty dago. I tell you what I want, Meester Policeman. I want to kill you, Meester Policeman!"

The stooping figure of the Italian straightened itself. In the dim light of the lantern Nugent saw the sinister glitter of a knife. The ex-wardman could not make a move without precipitating his doom. The Italian's cunning watchfulness precluded impulsive action.

"You're crazy, man!" Nugent hoped that palaver would bring him the desired opportunity to take the Italian by surprise. "I don't know you and don't know what you're talking about."

An evil leer framed the Italian's mouth.

"Yes, me craze. You maka me craze, you know. You no remember little stand, when you come every day, with uniform, and take fruit. Me get a wife, getta da store. Then you come every day. You say: "Where's mine?" You taka everything. You taka, too, da mon. You come one day I go way. Only my wife, my Fiametta, in da store. She no know you. She no give da mon. You kicka her and taka da little cross on her breast. And when she die in da hospital, I come to you, and I ask, please, give little cross. And you laugh, and you say: 'Dirty dago, go 'way.' Then, I go craze,

and I lose everything, everything. And now I picka da rags, and I say every day 'Vendetta,' and I pray I find you. And now I laugh, Meester Policeman, me, Pasquale Farsotti."

Nugent's every nerve was on the alert. At last, a step. But the Italian also heard and took it for his cue for action. Keeping his ferret-like eyes on the ex-wardman, Farsotti placed the lantern on the ground. Then, without shout or shriek, he threw himself on his cowering enemy and the struggle began.

The ex-wardman was armed, but the Italian's limbs were about him like the coils of a snake and Nugent could not reach his hip pocket. Over heaps of rubbish and piles of rags they rolled, grimly silent. As they squirmed out to the open pier from the boarded partition, Nugent saw Charlie standing at the edge of the dock.

"Charlie, for Heaven's sake, don't be standing there like that," panted the ex-wardman. "Get the gun out of my pocket, or soak him on the head with something."

"Nix," answered the young thief, without changing his position. "That ain't part o' my game. I don't know what's between you two, and it ain't for me to interfere in any grudge. Fight it out between yourselves."

The Italian was silent, but not inactive.

"Charlie, Charlie, for God's sake," whispered

Nugent, weakening rapidly. "He's cutting me to pieces. Charlie, for God's sake, don't let me die like a dog. I'll give you anything you want."

"Oh, shut up," sneered the thief, "I'm sorry I got mixed up with this at all. There's your boat, down here, and that's all I got to do with you. I'd better leave you two to yourselves. So long, and I hope the best man wins. No coroner's inquest for mine."

The crook turned toward the street. Passing the boarded sheltering of the rubbish, a rancid stench made him discover a dullish red glow on the other side of the partition. The lantern had been upset in the struggle.

Even before Charlie had overcome his curiosity to find out all about the fire, a pistol shot rang out.

"Gee, this is where I make tracks for home and mother," said Charlie, suiting the action to his words.

The shot had been heard by others. Several men were coming from the street. Two policemen were among them.

"Here, what's this?" cried one of the bluecoats, grabbing Charlie.

"Honest, I don't know," answered the crook, but he was, nevertheless, compelled to go with the officers to the scene of the suspected tragedy.

With his head hanging over the edge of the pier

they found Pasquale Farsotti with a bullet in his heart. Of the ex-wardman there was no trace.

"Aha," commented the policeman, who still had Charlie in his firm grasp, "and you don't know anything about this, do you? Now, don't you say anything which might be used against you, for Charlie, my boy, it looks bad for you."

At the station house a little cross of gold, inscribed "Fiametta Farsotti," was found on Charlie. A bundle of letters in the Italian's pockets were addressed to Pasquale Farsotti—and the blue-coated jurists smiled a meaning smile at Charlie.

It did not take very long to speed Charlie along the routine of justice. A few weeks, and all hope was gone.

"It serves me right," soliloquised Charlies in his cell. "Just think o' me trying to do a favour for a cop! That Nugent! He knew I was crooked, but he couldn't button his coat so's that cross wouldn't show on his watch slang. And him knowing I'd sooner steal than eat! I wonder if he really drowned? There's no trusting them fellows only as long as you see them."

It was a worrying thought.

"There's that old gag about truth always coming out. Well, I only hope it will in this case," Charlie sighed. "Gee, wouldn't it be fierce to get the rinky-dink for this, when I ain't had nothing to do with it? And only a dago, too!"

The strike of the miners had brought violence and destruction in its wake. Sullen parties of strikers were watching the heavily armed emergency officers who were guarding the ground and property of the company.

Here and there a sentry would take a fleeting glance at a newspaper.

"Hey, Jack, want to look at this?" shouted one to a stockily-built fellow who was guarding the entrance to the shaft of the mine. "A man might as well be in the desert as in Glastonburg for all the news you get. That there paper is a week old, and it's the latest I could get of any New York papers."

The other accepted the paper and looked through its columns carelessly. Suddenly he forgot his duty of guarding and read with avidity.

"So they got Charlie for doing the dago," he remarked when he had finished the article. "It's tough on him, but what did he want to swipe that cross from my watch chain for? Now, ten chances to one, he'll wind up in the chair."

Nugent threw the paper away, but what he had read could not be gotten rid of so easily. The see-saw of his emotions threw him into varying moods. His conscience, warped and distorted as it was, strove bravely, and——

"It's funny how this business makes a fellow

feel! Just as if I should go to the nearest telegraph office and wire them that I—— By God, I will!"

The Good had a grip on Nugent and was leading him to the nearest telegraph office. Then the Bad, the older stand-by, asserted itself.

It was the hour of evening's coming. A bird in the thicket began to carol his even-song. Like an anthem of thanksgiving the clear notes swung through the gathering vapours to the skies above. From the marshes came the minor chords of frog and cricket. All nature seemed to have intoned a droning, thrilling lullaby of rest, crooned by a chorus, impelled by trusting love. And even the ex-wardman felt the pervading whisper of creation.

This was something like living.

He had never felt like this before. He was inspired, hope rose in his breast. Peering through the mists before him, he saw the vision of his future: new fields of profitable activity, new worlds to conquer in the same old way. The past, that unlucky past, shrank, until it struck at the picture of Charlie in his cell. The Good made its last assault. The Bad made its strongest defence. But the ex-wardman wanted to live.

"To hell with him!" murmured Nugent; and returned to his post.

XVII

THE SLUMS' POINT OF VIEW

HAVING spent practically all my life in the tenement locality, and having watched for many years the spread of the liberal and educational tendencies among my people, I could not fail to be struck by a certain palpable oversight on the part of the many professional and volunteer educators and philanthropists who have invaded our precincts with the best intent. Perhaps I am wrong in my observation and deduction, or, perhaps, if this oversight exists it is intentional and for good reasons. However, being of the belief that an honest opinion is always worthy of a hearing, I will state my case and am only too willing to be proven wrong. You see, we—the under-dogs—have not many opportunities to express ourselves. Labour disputes are arbitrated, capital is always willing to meet its employees at the conference table, but philanthropy and pauperism have not yet reached that degree of mutual coöperation. As it is, philanthropy is active, pauperism is passive; one prescribes, the other takes the medicine without doubting or caring very much for its efficiency. And there is good reason for arbitration in our

lowest social strata. Do you think it would hurt sociological endeavour to have the "other side" express its opinion concerning certain phases of it? To effect speedy cures the concurrence of the patient is the most helpful, and a parliament of paupers and philanthropists, while bringing a better understanding and removing many prejudices, will create new perspectives and will prove the absolute futility of exploiting many pet theories. We—the under-dogs—have not sufficient say in this matter. The man who can twist an old doctrine into a new shape and can find a dozen followers can have columns for the utterance of his new-fangled philosophy, and is almost driven into the assumption that he is the long-expected prophet. (I have read some of these essays and have, too, met some of the writers. They are remarkable—both, the articles and the writers.) But we, the swallowers of the homœopathic and allopathic doses of social medicine, have to keep silent, and it is but rarely that one of us—as I in this case—has the chance to say or write something concerning the conditions prevalent among us, only to have his say ridiculed or ballooned by inflated statements.

As I and many of us of the tenements see it, all the trained, scientific, and religious endeavours in the slums have, after all, the one object: to teach us the art and science of life, of leading honest, pure, and wholesome lives. I have not yet heard

even the most radical express the opinion that such lives can be lived without the foundation of a home. And homes down our way are still things of horror. You know what they are physically; not a day passes without having such a "home" pictured in all its hideous detail in print. That they are bad is also further proven by the spasmodic movements to furnish other dwelling places for those now herded in tenements, and by the daily invasions of women who teach the essential features which make an orderly home. But what about the home spirit, the home life? Can you expect to make an ideal home out of a household in which the wife, son, and daughter are constantly exposed to the best influences and the father is absolutely neglected? What, then, is done for the fathers?

About two years ago, following one of my stories in a monthly periodical, in which I told of the slowly awakening desire for broader education among the younger of a certain class of my people, another writer contributed an article indorsing and improving on me. The picture gracing the first page of his article was that of an Italian labourer who was being taught the rudiments of writing and spelling by his little son, a pupil of the public school. I liked the picture and the story because they were true—but only to a limited extent. Were these evening sessions of father and son the usual custom no stories would be written about them, and they are

only remarkable because of their exception. As it is, most homes are deserted during the evening hours.

The breadwinners of the family, not at all properly sustained by their noon lunch (there's something to write about, that noon lunch), hurriedly swallow supper. If of the "advanced" order, the children, and even the mother, quickly adorn themselves for presentation at class, settlement, club, or lecture; if of the "old" order, the mother goes out to do her shopping and gossiping, the daughter hastens to meet her "steady," and the son joins his particular "gang" at its corner. And the father? Well, he is tired and can enjoy his leisure. I cannot speak for other localities, but I know that the boy with hoof and horns is always waiting for these leisure hours and never misses an opportunity to "get next to the old man." Our evening journals have become such fashion and etiquette teachers, not mentioning their beauty hints, that the "old man" finds very little reading in them, unless he wishes to help his wife and daughter by selecting some pattern for them. What shall he do after reading his paper? Where can he go? Of course there is the saloon, but, almost more than the saloons, the political ward clubs are bidding for his attendance—and are we not trying to keep the "old man" away from the real thing in devils?

And right here we have a striking commentary

on the situation. The ward politician, always close to his people, if not of them, has long ago recognised the spirit of gregariousness among the fathers, and utilises it most mightily. He is the only one who offers to the tired men of the tenement a more or less pleasant "hang-out" for the evening. He does not advertise his club, does not ask for donations or subscriptions, although membership fees have to be paid, and seems to have no trouble in engineering his enterprise. This the politician, whom we blame for most of our discouraging conditions, does because he knows the minds and inclinations of the people, to whom, through our apathy, he stands in a wrongly paternal position.

In speaking of this subject to others I have been told that a home, improved in tone by "advanced" mothers and children, cannot fail to reform the father. I hope there is enough evidence to prove that assertion; I so far have failed to see it. It is difficult to consider this without taking each nationality and race of the slums separately, yet I have found in the cases which have come under my observation that the fathers are either treated with mild and condescending contempt or are shown that they are a cause of shame to their progeny, or are practically driven from the house. A greed for learning and advancement has sprung up which has usurped many home functions. I know that every night in the week, Sundays included, the

father can go to a club. But we should not forget that most of these men, old, or at least middle-aged, have spent most of their lives in the home country, have still the old notions, are tired with everlasting struggling, and can scarcely be expected to find the right recreation at the noisy, dissertative, and radical meetings conducted by the leaders of the proletariat. The fathers have lost the faculty of becoming feverish on short notice. They have their experience behind them, and now, less aggressive than their sons, they long for quieter diversion. Yet they still can reason and see, and they wonder why the great leaders, the talkers, the prophets, are so singularly absent on the day when they are most needed—the day of the ballot.

If any lasting or intelligent efforts have been made to fertilise the leisure hours of the grown men of the tenements they have escaped my notice. On the other hand, I know of several well-meant, well-planned, and then ill-fated attempts to rectify the present state of affairs. They failed mostly because of external reasons.

It seems to be very hard for those who come to the slums to understand that the period of transition cannot be accomplished in a day. Workers in rescue missions feel deeply discouraged when hearing that a promising convert of the night before—promising on account of his abject dilapidation—and converted by the weird and frenzied harangue

of some theological privateer, not forgetting the bed or meal ticket, has "slid back again" on the following day. I yield to no one in my loyalty to the good, old-fashioned religion, but I hate to have lived in sin, wickedness, and crime a lifetime and then depend on the version of His Word as offered in those missions to drag me from the mire of years and place me immediately and securely on the soundest Rock of Ages. It is forgotten that these wrecked men are mentally deranged by organic or nervous disorders and that they cannot become the equals of the lesser saints in the twinkling of an eye.

In a similar degree we find this same drawback in other instances. A few years ago a number of splendid women opened a "Tea Parlour—For Men Only." It met with instantaneous success. The place was filled from its regular opening hour, 10 A. M. (we have few bankers or men with banking hours down my way), until the closing time, nine o'clock. I went there on the third day after its opening. The twenty-three men present, with one curious exception, were from the Bowery lodging houses, seven blocks distant, every one of them a professional pauper and only fit for the workhouse or jail. The men, the fathers of the immediate neighbourhood, did not hear of the existence of the place until about a week later. And why not? Nicely printed bills stating that a place where *men*

of the neighbourhood and their sons could assemble for social intercourse having been deemed desirable, it had been provided, and "you are cordially invited," were distributed in every lodging house on the Bowery. But the fathers were again forgotten. Some of them went eventually to look at the place, or even to enter, but very few went the second time. The place oozed an unnatural, sterilised kindness, and the appointments were absolutely ridiculous from the standpoint of the men. We learn slowly, we grown-ups, yet our ballots count as much.

Then there was that club, started with the most sublime proposition of founding a place for "all sorts and conditions of men." Confession is good for the soul—and I was one of the dreamers. Ah, we dreamed and fabled of a better understanding, how capitalist and sweat-shop worker would meet to enjoy equal privileges, how we would be but men, facing one another on the level of our conscience. Alas! before we were fairly started it was decided by the powers that we—not the capitalists—could not govern ourselves, and we were provided with necessary and advisable restrictions. Members were invited, even sought. They came in hordes; therefore care had to be taken in their selection. This, by the way, was an appendix to "all sorts and conditions." Several representatives of the leading "gangs" were asked to become

members, but as they in one or two evenings could not shake off the liberal education of the streets, accumulated in many years, they were asked to leave. Unfortunately, some people come quicker than they leave; factions formed; the president, famous throughout the world as educator and organiser, could not handle the element—and now nothing is left excepting: "To Let."

The most discouraging feature about these movements is that, although not intended to be educational and only intended as social centres, they are almost invariably established without consulting the people of the territory to be benefited and without being assured that the need for such a movement exists there. Although not the best illustration, the much-mentioned Subway Tavern will make the point clearer. In the cleverly managed press notices preceding the opening of the place a certain divine was quoted as describing the Tavern as a "place where the tired toiler and mechanic could have his glass of beer—if he must have it—as good as it can be brewed and in as cheerful surroundings as possible—until we shall have real people's clubs throughout our city, yes, throughout our land."

That the Subway Tavern did not start out rightly and energetically to live up to its purpose and that it has utterly failed in it those who have been there recently and some time ago will admit. Above all there was no demand for it in that particular local-

ity. Surrounded on one side by business and manufacturing concerns, on the other by an institution for children and Police Headquarters, on the third it is flanked by a row of tenements inhabited by Italians, who prefer their own saloons, where "bigger"—and worse—beers are given and where more noise is permitted. Depending for its day trade on the near-by business houses and headquarters, it is a "sight of New York" in the evening, visited by gay tourists and sightseers. The other fallacies and mistakes of the Tavern have been too often discussed to receive additional mentioning here. However, I would like to quote here a man who has lived for over twenty years in Elizabeth Street tenements—two blocks from the Tavern.

I asked him his candid opinion of the Tavern. He had been to it—once.

"Oh, I guess it's all right. Them two blocks over there have never been much good for the liquor business since the high license, but that Tavern'll make out all right with all the advertising it got and the many swell people that go to see it."

"But don't you people of the neighbourhood frequent it?"

"What'll we do that for? They have nothing there that I can't get better right two doors from my house. Besides, they're a company or a corporation, and they're the devil to do business with!"

"But don't you think it will have a certain influence on the neighbourhood?"

"Influence? Influence? Are you kidding me, now?" Yet he grew serious. "When I see how them rich people spend money to do something for our wives and children I take my hat off to them; but when they get 'bit' for a thing like that, when they let every Tom, Dick, and Harry come along and get them to put up money for that kind of a thing and think we want it, then I know they don't, or don't want to, understand us—and I get discouraged."

The point of the above is that many of my people, on account of the ill-advised and foolish experiments practised on the slums, have lost their faith in the sagacity and sincerity of the philanthropists.

Yet, in spite of great obstacles, so many things have been made possible that I am fain to believe people's, or at least men's, clubs of the right sort should be feasible. Another feature, perhaps attractive to some investing philanthropist, is that they would be self-supporting, paying fair interest on the capital. Have we not the Mills Houses as glorious examples of philanthropic investment! Built to pay four, they are now paying close on twenty per cent. Yet, with all possible appreciation of the boon they were to bring, many of us who understand the true conditions in slums and lodging

houses would like to see them closed to-day. But this being hardly to the point, let us return to the practical side of the clubs.

Less than one hundred thousand dollars would equip club houses or rooms for over thirty city wards. A moderate membership fee should be fixed. Among other sources of revenue would come the payment for games, special entertainments, and the rent of the hall for all sorts of neighbourhood doings, not forgetting the politicians, who should be only too welcome to expound their platforms to the club members. The election of the first officers and the original starting of the club will not be easy, but will repay early disappointment by continued permanency. Factional disruption, political partisanship, and other threatening dangers should be easily curbed or made impossible by careful charter and by-laws. Not to be behind the Subway Tavern, the selling of drink should be left to the option of each individual club. Not one of them should be started with a bar. By the time the men have sufficient funds to think about the bar they might have outgrown their strongest longing for it. If they must have it, let them own it and, in part at least, receive their money back.

I have neither the space nor the intention to go deeper into the club project at this time. But I want to assure you that the men can govern them-

selves and that they are ready to spend their leisure hours decently. They will not be patronised and must be handled with the same tact exercised with the members of our fashionable clubs. Above all, every member of the club must be a resident of the ward, or, at least, must have a home, and the club must not become a "sight of New York"—not until you will escort idle gapers into our houses to show them "how they live."

I need not add that I have not the training to give you a scientific treatise on the subject. But I know what the men do now in their leisure hours and what they could be made to do. Only too frequently these men are misjudged. I am often astounded on hearing people who should know better speak of Bowery lodgers as men of the tenements. Less than a tenth part of the fifty thousand men who sleep, night after night, in lodging houses come from the tenements. The creatures of the lodging houses are the black sheep of decent families, wrecks of their own folly, discarded relatives, idiots, made that by some domestic tragedy which unbalances them; undesirable immigrants, lured here by promises of plenty—in a word, they are the human junk heap of the country, picked up from miles around and heedlessly thrown into the dives and lodging houses and left to rot.

The man of the tenement? Oh, he broods and "dopes" his life away and would crack many a

"WRECKS OF THEIR OWN FOLLY"

joke at the expense of his brother, the ox, did he but know of him.

I cannot rid myself of the opinion that the solution of many of our existing evils lies in patriotic politics. And what can we expect if we leave him, he of the vote, absolutely to the ward heeler, who, so far, seems to be the only one to understand the "old man"? While it will be very difficult to make saints out of the men of my people, and while the clubs will never accomplish it, the men, through the clubs, would gradually come out of their lethargy and would come closer to their families and their land.

XVIII

THE BURDEN OF THE MANY

THE mass-meeting held in the old Thalia Theatre under the auspices of the Tuscarora Club was in full swing. The audience, packing the house to its very top, saw the customary platform arrangement on the roomy stage. In the centre was the speaker's table, covered with an American flag and topped with the usual pitcher and glass. Flanking it on either side, several local celebrities and the battery of orators were disposing themselves. Back of the front row and as far as the very wall of the stage the less important leaders and captains were permitted to show their constituents that they "belonged right in with the big guns."

The resolutions were read, moved, and passed; the chairman made his opening address, ending it by introducing the first speaker; and the last rally of the clans, who on the morrow would struggle as of yore for the supremacy of their party, was started.

A rousing welcome greeted every old war-horse of the party rising to give voice to oft-repeated sentiments. But when a dark, serious young man,

introduced by the chairman as "our friend and neighbour who, surely, needs no introduction to any of us," stepped to the edge of the stage, a cheer went up which threatened to raise the roof.

The object of this tumultuous appreciation stood quietly and somewhat awkwardly, staring into the audience. One not familiar with the central personality would have fancied that a symphony of masterly rhetoric was destined to follow this preparatory pause. Alas! Andrew Ferguson was not an orator. He was not there to deliver a long rhapsody on patriotism and statesmanship—and it was not expected of him. They all knew him, were satisfied with just seeing him, and were willing to proclaim their endorsement of him by much noise and shouting.

His speech was short and composed of platitudes:

"Fellow-citizens: Most of you have known me ever since I was a boy and know that I'm no speech-maker. Such as it is, my record speaks for itself, and there is nothing in my past that I want to hide. Whatever pledges have been made by the party or me will be fulfilled. And there is no need of my telling you that I will always look after the interests of my constituents, because you know it. So, hoping to see you all doing your duty on election day, I now give way to some more gifted speaker."

Again the audience rose as one man and made the rafters ring. But he, who had just "said his

piece," made his embarrassed way to his seat, bowing slightly in the direction of a proscenium box in which several young ladies were chaperoned by a stoutish, grey-haired matron.

Andrew Ferguson had been permitted by "the powers" to be the most conspicuous figure in this campaign. He had long been a factor in the politics of the ward. His rise had been due to the friendship of the one recognised despot of down-town politics. This leader had taken a liking to the boy, and, after giving him profitable employment in his many "cafés" had, on his retirement from active and open connections with divedom, selected Ferguson as his trusted factotum.

Although thus deprived of any visible means of support, Ferguson's prosperity did not diminish, and it made him the target of many insinuating hints and slurs. The Great Man did not care to have his own prestige lessened by these comments on his protégé, and, after having him duly made the regular leader of the ward, had him nominated for the high office of assemblyman—to be a legislator for the "freest people on earth."

And so it was that the picture of the Hon. Andrew Ferguson looked at his constituents from many windows. Particularly, every "dive," every place of evil repute, had his portrait in the place of honour.

It cannot be said that the first impression of the

face was bad. The day of the fat-jowled and fat-paunched leader is quickly passing. The "young, rising statesman" has arrived, and Ferguson, a perfect type of him, looked out from his picture with smiling eyes, hair carefully parted and plastered down from "de middle," with collar, tie, and clothes of latest fashion.

Such rapid progress as Ferguson's is certainly worth watching, and even the women of the district had taken a deep interest in his career. But Ferguson had long ago settled his affections on Mary Slater, the adopted daughter of a childless widower.

Old Slater had always been an indefinable quantity in down-town politics. He had never held office, yet had an immense following, which he controlled absolutely. During critical periods in campaigns he usually held the balance of power, and even presidential possibilities had come to him to solicit his support. At the death of his sister, Hugh Slater had taken her little daughter to his lonely house, and, though he was not lavish with his affection, Mary liked her grim uncle and was grateful to him for having given her a home.

When it could no longer be denied that Andrew Ferguson was paying court to Mary Slater, many were inclined to ascribe it to the young man's desire to profit by the old politician's influence. If Ferguson had such design it was only secondary. Also an orphan, his better feelings had been stirred

by the lonely position of the young girl, and, from pitying her, he had come to love her. To-night, the hero of the hour, he felt somewhat depressed at not having been able to give a better account of himself as an orator. However, as soon as feasible he left the stage and entered the box, where Mrs. Landish, the wife of a State legislator, had a party of ladies, including Mary Slater, under her wing.

"Do you know," said Mary Slater, after extending the perfunctory congratulations, "you said more in your few words than all the other speakers put together, and I thank you for it. I was afraid you would start in to tell a lot of discrediting things about the man who is running against you, and would rail against all and everything. Now I know you better than ever and know that your constituents and—and—others can trust you."

"Thank you, Mary," whispered Ferguson, leaning over her chair. "Thank you for trusting me, and let me assure you that I will never disappoint the trust placed in me."

Twenty-four hours later the din of tin horns and the shouting of the multitude announced that the sacred rights of franchise had once more been executed by a free people. At the clubs and associations of the East Side the elected were showered with congratulations. Assisted by his sponsor, the Great Man, Andrew Ferguson was holding a levee

at the rooms of the Tuscarora Club and had his hands almost wrung off by his many well-wishers, who hoped to be remembered in the fat days to come. But, flattering as it all was, Ferguson took leave as soon as possible and hurried to Mary Slater.

The uncle was still busy with the aftermath of election, and the girl was alone. Mary had prayed all day for her lover's victory, and now his shining eyes messaged the well-won fight.

"It's all over, Mary, and I'm elected by an overwhelming majority. It was a foregone conclusion that I would be elected; still, it is good to know that I'm no longer a nobody, but the Hon. Andrew Ferguson, member of the Legislature, who now asks Mary Slater most humbly to become his wife."

They were both prepared for this moment, and all that remained for old Slater to do on his return was to give his smiling consent.

There was just time enough for a short honeymoon trip before the opening of the Assembly, and, returning from it, the husband left his happy bride installed in a cosey flat. Mary felt as if in fairyland, and after the departure of Ferguson set about to make their home the most beautiful in the ward.

For a girl who had spent all her life in an atmosphere in which all-pervading and all-controlling corruption did not even make the pretence of hiding itself, Mary was singularly innocent. From the time that she had been adopted by her uncle her

life had been full of household duties, which were further increased by catering to the many whims of the aging politician. There had been little time for leisure and gossip, and the few minutes she could occasionally snatch from her work were spent in miscellaneous reading. It was this indiscriminate reading that had led Mary to see in Andrew Ferguson chivalric traits which even his closest friends failed to discern. It also helped her to set standards which her lover would have to maintain to be sure of her love.

The duties of legislators are various and many. In his home a room was fitted up as a sort of audience chamber, where Ferguson received his many callers. First, a heterogeneous crowd came to see him, poor and beggarly, reputable and disreputable. Ere long the outward character of the visitors improved, and the conferences were frequently conducted in greatest secrecy, behind locked and bolted doors. Mary was not of an ultra-inquisitive turn of mind, and, while cognizant of the peculiar calls and callers, never dreamed that everything was not as it should be. Besides, her own affairs were needing the closest attention.

The training at her uncle's house had made Mary an exceedingly economical housekeeper, and she was not long in finding that her husband's extravagant ways were not at all justified by their resources. She knew the exact amount of her hus-

band's salary, and also knew that they were living beyond it. With the realisation of their prodigality came Mary's determination to retrench expenditures, and she began by discharging their two servants.

Ferguson's first intimation of his wife's economical measures came to him one night at dinner. Instead of the servant he found his young wife, in snowy apron, attending to the table.

"Mary, girl, this looks like old times, like when you were still at the uncle's. You look very nice in that apron. But, tell me, why didn't you let the girls do all this, instead of tiring yourself?"

"Because we haven't any girls," answered Mary smilingly. "I'm getting the dinner to-night and will get it every night hereafter. I discharged the servants to-day and will have no more help, because we cannot afford it. I figured it all out, and found that if we were to keep on living as we have been, you'd be in debt at the end of the year instead of having something put aside from your salary. I have been used to looking after the pennies ever since I was a child, and, without being miserly, I can save in many ways without your feeling it."

His wife's arrangement was not at all to Ferguson's liking.

"You foolish little girl, you! And you want to save, and so that I won't feel it. But I tell you it can't be done. We don't have to economise,

Mary. Even if we were living three times as expensively as we're living now, we would be a whole lot to the good. I'm making money hand over fist, and——"

"You're doing nothing of the kind," interposed Mary warmly. "As I told you, I figured it all out to-day, and I know just exactly how much we can afford to spend on our home."

"But you figured with only my salary as basis," explained Ferguson laughingly. "Don't you know that that isn't all I make?"

"It isn't——?"

"Why, of course not. You see there is my mileage, and my"—for some unaccountable reason Ferguson's speech came haltingly—"and my—— Why, a man in my position has lots of opportunities for—for—investments and—other ways of increasing his income. Oh, you ought to know what I mean! And now, as punishment for my wife's miserly intentions, I shall prove to her right now that I have no desire of hoarding my money."

Bewildered, Mary took the small parcel from him and opened it with care. At the sight of the glittering gems she stood speechless.

"Well, does the punishment fit the crime?" asked Ferguson exultingly.

"Oh, Andrew, how could you? It is almost sinful to waste money like this," stammered the wife. "I have never worn such jewelry. It must

have cost a fortune, and it is surely too good for me."

"Too good for you?" he mocked. "Well, your modesty is very becoming to you, but it is not at all justified. The most brilliant diamonds wouldn't be any too good for you, and if you have never worn any before it is high time that you should begin now. Instead of having my wife turn into a miser, I want her to outshine any woman in the district. Look at that Mrs. Landish, and the diamonds she has! And her husband been only three terms in the Legislature. So, don't you worry, girlie. I got enough to buy you one of these gewgaws occasionally and pay for our groceries besides."

Mary, sadly nonplussed and disappointed, made no reply, but waited on Ferguson, who ate a hurried dinner as an extra session of the Assembly required him to leave for the capital that night.

After the departure of her husband Mary endeavoured to understand the situation. They had been married almost a year. Nothing as yet had happened to make her doubt her husband's love. She was sure of that, as sure as of her own love for him. But for some unaccountable reason she felt that everything was not as it should be. Her innocence and inexperience prevented her from surmising the true state of affairs, but her fancy showed her many phantoms. Andrew might have

run himself into debt to increase her comfort or might have risked his small capital in hazardous speculations. There were a hundred possibilities, and, instead of understanding the situation, her perplexity increased.

In her perturbed state of mind she thought of her foster-father, and went to him who, certainly, knew every condition in the game of politics.

Old Slater, famed for his brutal directness, saw immediately that this was no ordinary call.

"Well, what's the trouble?"

With some hesitancy, Mary described her husband's recklessness in money matters and asked her foster-father if, in his opinion, they were not living far above their station.

"What's he doing? Doing the same as the rest o' them, trying to beat the races or speculating in Wall Street?" queried Slater gruffly.

"Oh, no; not that," remonstrated Mary, resenting the scandalous insinuation. "But I have made some calculations, and if we keep on living the way we do our expenses will exceed Andrew's salary by at least five hundred dollars at the end of the year. Besides, he made me a present of some jewelry which must have cost over a hundred dollars, if not more, and——"

Slater's loud guffaw indicated his appreciation of this huge joke.

"Say, you're a wonder, Mary," he laughed,

wiping his flabby cheeks. "Here you got a husband who's a model and a bundle o' virtues, who don't gamble or speculate, but buys you diamonds instead, and still you're kicking. Say, if I was to tell anybody about this they'd never believe me that old Slater's niece and step-daughter could be as green as all this." He changed to a more serious tone. "The best thing you can do is to leave your husband's money-matters alone. As long as he's the leader of the district you needn't be afraid of dying of starvation. And, another thing—don't you get too inquisitive. There are a whole lot of 'perquisites of office,' but it takes too blamed long to explain them to people. As long as he keeps you in a nice home and buys you those diamond things, you ain't got no kick coming, and better mind your own business."

Mary's mind was not at all relieved by the interview with her uncle. That something, which seemed to be an open secret to many, was still hidden and unknown to her was conclusively proven to her by the innuendo of the old politican. She almost regretted having come to him. Her husband was the one to enlighten her. He was due home shortly and she would go to him with her questions.

Lost in thought at the corner of the street, she was greatly annoyed by the swarm of newsboys shouting their "Extras," adding a confused jum-

ble about some important occurrence at the State capital. That the news could have the slightest connection with her troubles was not even dreamed by Mary. On the car she could not avoid seeing glaring headlines in the paper eagerly read by the man sitting beside her:

BRIBERY SCANDAL

FRANCHISE GRAFT EXPOSED

Assemblyman Threatened with Arrest

Her husband was in the Assembly!

The very next line had her husband's name in capital letters. She read on, but the type blurred before her eyes. No, she would get off, buy a paper, and read it without prejudice or bias.

The account was given with great detail. The ring of contractors and promoters had thrown hundreds of thousands of dollars into the legislative house. The money was to have been distributed by their most able representative and champion, Andrew Ferguson, who at the moment of victory had turned it into defeat by "fraudulent" disbursement of the bribe entrusted to him. Greed, it was claimed, had made him "shave" the individual allotments, thereby increasing his to the lion's share. The "defrauded" patriots had bolted, and, in the turmoil ensuing, the "deal"

had been dragged into publicity—for which noble deed every newspaper and "undefrauded" statesman was claiming the credit. It was rumoured that indictments were being prepared.

How Mary got home, and how she spent the interval until her husband's home-coming, no one, not even she, could tell.

A late train brought the legislator to the city. Immediately a council of the leaders was held. "The Party was shaken to its very foundations." The executive—and scheming—session lasted until the small hours of the morning. Then Ferguson went home.

His wife, pale and silent, rose from her seat at the window, swaying between contempt and loyalty, not yet knowing whether to reproach or pity him. Ferguson needed no sympathy, much less pity. The dejected, haggard criminal of her mental vision, sneaking home in disgrace and fear of detection, proved to be a debonair and jaunty gentleman, bringing with him the aroma of the cigars and drink consumed in the council chamber.

"Andy, oh, Andy, tell me, it's all a mistake, isn't it? You had nothing to do with it; you're not implicated in this—in this—oh, I can't even mention it!"

"For Heaven's sake, what is the matter with you, Mary?" Ferguson was as self-possessed as ever. "What are you talking about? That garbled and sensational account in this afternoon's paper? You

ought to have more sense than that. It won't amount to anything—it's nothing. We fixed it to-night, as soon as I got back to town; and in a day or two the whole thing will be forgotten. These things will happen sometimes, but they always make more smoke than fire."

His wife remaining silent, Ferguson permitted an expression of deep injury to creep over his features.

"But it's nice to find out what kind of a wife I got. Supposing the thing would have amounted to something, I can imagine what I would have got from you. Where a good wife would have had a few words of cheer or comfort, you would have had nothing but blame and upbraidings for me. And all because I would have been caught with the goods." He stepped closer to her. "Say, do you know how you act? You act as if I were a thief and——"

"What are you, if not that?" cried Mary, and Ferguson realised that his "fool wife" had changed to a wise woman.

"Oh, so I'm a thief, am I?" he sneered. "Well, if I stole, for whom did I steal? I stole for you, because I loved you and want to make you the 'lady of the ward.' I wanted to make money, lots of it, because I wanted you to be envied by the others. What do you think did I go to the Assembly for? Men don't go into politics for their health.

That's where the 'investments' are. And you, as to you—do you think you can make anybody believe that you were so soft you did not know where the money was coming from? I might believe it, but they won't. They know you handled most of the money and got diamonds bought with it, and—— Ah, don't be foolish, Mary! Have a little sense. I'm no worse than the others and——"

Ferguson had been so intense in his harangue that the collapse of his wife had been unnoticed by him, and he barely had the time to catch her in his arms. It was the beginnings of a long illness.

Weeks passed and the relations of wife and husband were still undefined. Mary never asked for him and would not see him unless the nurse or Mrs. Landish were present.

The liking of Mrs. Landish for Mary was of many years' standing. And it increased when Ferguson became a member of the Legislature, in which Jim Landish had served for two preceding terms. Enjoying a popularity that was genuine, Mrs. Landish was esteemed and respected for her charity and her good-humour, which never varied even under the most trying circumstances.

Mary firmly believed that her recovery was speeded by the motherly care of Mrs. Landish, who often sat for hours beside the invalid's couch. It was not necessary for Mary to tell her story in detail. Mrs. Landish understood readily. Her hus-

band, too, was a legislator. The older woman had, also, had her experience and could sympathise.

"Yes, dear, it's bad and wicked. I used to feel the same way about it, just the same, but——"

"Oh, how could you stand it?" Mary would interpose with a semblance of her old spirit. "It it unbearable to know that——"

"I know, I know," consoled the friend, "but what can we do? And, at last, one gets used to it, because—and that is the saddest of it all—there is no choice."

Restored to health, it seemed as if Mary had learned her lesson from Mrs. Landish. Whenever husband and wife appeared on public occasions it would have been difficult to find any difference in their intercourse. The servants were installed again and were given *carte blanche,* as Mary interfered very rarely in household matters. Her social duties were not neglected; and they kept increasing, as term after term her husband was sent to the Assembly or other important legislative bodies, where his services were of such incalculable value to his constituents. At the many "affairs" which were honoured by the presence of the Hon. Andrew Ferguson and his wife Mary's diamonds and gowns were the admiration and envy of the other women. Withal, Mary did not forget the less fortunate. The audience room, once used by her husband, was now entirely reserved for the poor of the district,

who came to her on many errands and were never sent away unhelped or unconsoled. And in the same measure as the husband is held up to the young men of the ward as an example worth following, so the wife is quoted as a model to all young maids and women by their elders.

As to the love and the inner life of Andrew Ferguson and his wife—who cares for the lot of the wives of our statesmen!

XIX

YULETIDE DOWN IN MULBERRY

WE were all at Lynch's in Mulberry Street, and we all knew it was the evening of the twenty-fourth of December. Now I, for one, haven't got anything to say against the beauties of sporting life, where everything—money, drinking, and eating—comes to you in the way of a surprise; but I must admit that these holidays are not exactly the most cheerful moments in a sporting fellow's existence. Try as hard as you may, there are a few days in the year when a fellow simply can't help doing a little serious thinking. And the worst of these days is Christmas Eve.

So we—there were about six of us—didn't feel any too hilarious and did a pile of thinking. Those that had never had a regular home sat kicking because they couldn't spend the day with their folks; and those that had lost their home kicked because they had lost it for the sake of this sporting life. And if you'd taken us and stood us up on our heads, there wouldn't as much as a penny dropped from our pockets.

And it was Christmas Eve.

Sure enough, old man Lynch, knowing our feel-

ings and their colour, did the right thing and called us over to the bar every once in a while; but that didn't brighten things to any considerable extent.

There we sat and had the whole place to ourselves. The door hadn't been opened in over an hour, all the customers being home and enjoying themselves with their families.

All of a sudden—there hadn't been a word said in over half an hour—Hickey O'Connell jumps up.

"I can't stand this, fellows! I never yet had a Christmas without a home or a piece of turkey, and if you can stand this, I can't. I'm going out to get a piece o' money."

Even before we knew what he was going to do he was out of the door, and we got a little closer around the stove.

After a while old Lynch put up the drinks again and asked if any of us had seen Nick, the dago, who had the boot-blacking stand in front of the store, and did the cleaning for it instead of paying for the privilege. There was nobody foolish enough to think that Nick ever would get rich through that blacking stand. He used to be something or other in his own country, and when he landed in Mulberry Street all the dago girls got stuck on him on account of his ways and looks. He certainly could get more music out of his guitar than any other man I ever knew. Besides that, he used to sing those foreign songs; and, the first thing you knew,

he and Annita Riccardo got married. For them to get married was the best proof that most of these foreigners haven't got all the sense they ought to have. Of course I didn't have a chance to count their money, but it's a safe bet that there wasn't over five dollars between the two when they got spliced.

Nick wasn't much of a drinker, and that's about all he was likely to get for his singing and playing in Mulberry Street. He looked for work all right, but he had no trade and wasn't any too strong, and he had no luck along that line beyond getting an odd job here and there. Then when Tony, who had the blacking stand in front o' Lynch's, moved downtown, he recommended Nick for the job, and he's been there ever since.

Now, there are more "hang-ups" than cash shines on this stand, and when his wife took sick, things went very much to the bad with Nick. The few pennies he made went for the doctor and the medicine, and then, to make matters worse, came the baby, which was a girl. Nick always used to smile and speak of the kid, but you couldn't help noticing that he wasn't eating any too much and begrudged every penny for fear they wouldn't have what they needed home. Of course, old man Lynch and some of us, when we were flush, would stake him to a little change, but, you know, times ain't what they used to be in sporting life, and, whilst

we had the necessary good nature, we didn't have the necessary cash.

Well, as I was saying, Lynch was asking if any of us had seen the dago, when he came in from the sidewalk.

"Boss, me wanta go home. You want tapa more beer before I go?"

"I guess not," said Lynch. "There ain't a cent in the house. But you can put a little more coal on the fire before you go."

Nick came over to the stove, and then we noticed that he was dressed up as if for a special occasion. Not that he had on different clothes—he only had just that one suit—but he had his hair all combed, and must have used a bar of soap to get all the blacking off his hands and face.

"What's the matter?" I asked him. "Going to a ball to-night?"

You ought to have seen the way he looked at me! Just as if he wanted to scare me.

"Yes, me go to ball, greata, fina ball," he said, and laughs rather foolishly. "Yes, me go get plenta to eat and drink, me and da wife and da babe."

I knew he was not telling me the truth, but I owed him for so many shines that I couldn't afford to have an argument with him.

As soon as he got through with the stove he went to the door, and old Lynch hollered after him:

"Merry Christmas, Nick! And don't forget, I got a turkey in the ice-box for you for to-morrow."

Naturally, you would suppose that the dago would have said "Thank you" or something of the kind, but he only stood there like a dummy, and then, all of a sudden, he opens up.

"Turkey? Ha, ha!" and you didn't know whether he was laughing or crying. "Me no want da turk. Me got plenta, ev'ryt'ing home. Da wife and da babe and me, we got fina Christmas." And then he turned to us around the stove. "Say, young fellows, you lika da plenta da fun? Yes, you come wida me, I show."

As I told you, there was nothing doing in Lynch's, and we knew that the dagoes always have lots of drinking and eating when they celebrate any holidays, and, the first thing you knew, the whole lot of us followed Nick out of the store.

Somebody asks him: "What is it, Nick? Christening, or wedding, or only Christmas?"

"No, no, but plenta da fun," was all he would say.

We no sooner had climbed the five flights of stairs up to his room when we tumbled that we had been sold by the dago. An old soap-box was on top of the range, but there was no fire in it, and it was freezing outside. His wife was sitting on the other side of the range, but never took any notice of us at all.

Nick went over to the mantel and lit another lamp, and then he began saying, "Merra Christamas, Merra Christamas," until we thought he had lost his reason.

Well, there wasn't anything doing up there, and so we started to go back to Lynch's. But Nick noticed it, and jumped to the door.

"Oh, you no go yet!" he cried. "We have nice Christamas, plenta da fun, and plenta of ev'ryt'ing. See," and with that he rushes over to the soap-box, "look, look! Merra Christamas, eh?"

Not one of us went over to that box. Everyone of us felt right there and then what was in the box, and besides we all remembered then that the kid hadn't been playing round the same as always. But Nick, he kept hollering, and nothing would do but we all had to go over and take a peep.

I might as well tell you we felt kind of foolish. You know, between you and me, it wasn't much of a kid. I don't think it weighed over ten pounds, and you could see by the looks of it that it wouldn't have lasted much longer, anyway. We thought the best thing we could do was to take a quiet sneak, and were making for the door, when Nick gives a yelp, and grabs that box in his arms as if he would never let go of it again.

"Mia bombina, povre bombina!" he kept on, sobbing and crying as if his heart was right in that box.

It's funny how these things happen, but when I looked around there was every one of us fellows standing there without a move, and all with their hats off, which we had on when we first came in. And the worst of it was that there wasn't a cent between us, and the poor kid all ready to go off in a soap-box.

We did a little whispering between us, and, being of no earthly use there, we were going out this time for fair, and—if lucky—come back again. Neither Nick nor his wife were taking any notice of us, and we would have got out all right, only just then she slipped out of the chair and on to the floor without as much as a sigh.

That stirred us up. While a couple of us were picking her up, the others were making a quick bee-line for Lynch's or any place to get something strong for to brace her up. But even before those fellows got down one flight of stairs, there was Hickey O'Connell hollering up from the bottom floor:

"Hey, you fellows, ain't you going to come down? I got bushels of the stuff, but I ain't climbing up to a dago's joint on Christmas Eve."

We were afraid that perhaps Nick might hear him, but the dago just kept on hugging that box, and was dead to everything else.

Healy and Collins, the two that were on their way to Lynch's, ran downstairs and told Hickey

O'Connell all about it, and he must have fairly jumped the flights to get into the room.

His hands were full of bills and silver. When he dumped it on the table you could see in a minute that there was enough to buy Christmas dinners for fifty of us. He shoved it all together in a pile and then turned to Nick.

"Say, Nick, you wasn't going to bury the baby in that soap-box, was you?"

He had to repeat it before the dago understood him.

"Bury da babe?" and the poor, crazy dago laughed. "Ha, ha, me no bury da babe. Me throw away; into da street; into ev'ryt'ing. What's the matter? you no care? Dees only one dago babe, none good for notting, but," and again he clutched that box, "me love deesa dago babe, deese povre bombina, and dees is da Merra Christamas."

"Now, don't be talking like a hard-boiled egg," said Hickey, who was a good fellow, but had no education. "It's your kid, and I guess it don't make any difference whether it's dago or anything else. Nick, I got an old lady, and that poor soul loves me to-day, and, God knows, I'm black enough to be a dago. And, anyway, that kid of yours ain't going to be buried that way."

In less than five minutes Baccigalupi, the undertaker, was notified, and, after that was fixed, Hickey stepped over to the table and separated the bills and

the silver. All the silver and loose change he put in his pocket. Then he took all the bills without counting—and there must have been at least thirty dollars in that roll—and hands them to Nick.

It was so unexpected that Nick didn't understand for a long while. When he understood—you ought to have seen him—he acted as if he'd won the capital prize in the lottery.

"What? da mon for me, for me?" he jabbered, all excited. "Ah, you're craze, Hickey, you—no, no, me craze, yes, me craze. For da bombina——"

"Oh, that's all right, Nick," says Hickey, as if he was giving money to the poor every day. "I owe you for a whole lot of shines over to the stand, and you can pay me back in shines for what's over when you're working again."

When we got downstairs Hickey counted the change he had in his pocket, and we saw the finish of any turkey hopes. There was just enough for a beef-stew and a couple of drinks for each of us. Still, every one of us was kind of jealous because we didn't have the chance to stake the dago.

We went over to Tucker's and ate, and then went back to Lynch's. It didn't take long to spend the few cents we had, and when we got down to the last round Hickey made a speech.

"Well, fellows, we got beat out of our turkey, and I'm sorry for you. I don't think any of you are kicking about it. If there is anybody inclined

to kick, now is the time for him to say so," says Hickey, without anybody taking him up. "I know one thing, and that is that I am willing to bet my last cent I'll have my turkey next Christmas—and here's to it."

We didn't even have our glasses back on the bar when the door opened and in came Mullen and Hecker, the two wardmen. They didn't take any chances when they saw there were six of us, and pulled their guns on us. Even with that we would have been willing to give them a fight, because we knew what they were after; but Hickey queered the game.

"Ah, they got me dead to rights, fellows," said he, and went right over to the fly cops. "Anyway, I guess Nick will be shining your shoes for some time on 'hang-up,' and I was right. I'll have my turkey in jail next Christmas. It's the only place where you're sure of it."

And so we spent that Christmas down in Mulberry.

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